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The Ancient Church and Parish
of Abernethy



The Round Tower of Abernethy.

The
Ancient Church and Parish
of Abernethy

AN HISTORICAL STUDY

BY THE

REV. D. BUTLER, M.A.

MINISTER OF THE PARISH

SACRÆ ORIGINES

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCXCVII



*MEMORIÆ MEI PATRIS,
ET MATRI MEÆ ET UXORI,
HUNC LIBRUM
DEDICO.*

PREFACE.

ABERNETHY has been a parish of exceptional interest and of unique importance in the early civil and ecclesiastical history of Scotland. It was the capital of the Pictish kingdom, and as an ecclesiastical centre was closely connected with the introduction of Christianity into the country. It had a priority in time and influence even to Iona, and, with its monastery, schools, and missionaries, was the mother church of central and eastern Scotland. In connection with early religious work and education, it discharged the same function in the Midlands of Scotland as the Candida Casa did in Northumbria.

Abernethy Monastery and Church were not parochial, and cannot be treated in an exhaustive manner apart from the organic development of which they formed the impulse and centre. While they possess many distinctive features, they are to be understood in their true setting as part of the civil and ecclesiastical history of Pictavia. Up to the time of Queen Margaret their history was an outstanding one, and formed to a considerable extent that of the early Celtic Church in Scotland.

The first church was probably the result of St Ninian's preaching among the Southern Picts: it was dedicated, according to the

Pictish Chronicle, in 460 A.D., to St Bridget of Kildare, and at the same time endowed with its great territorial possessions by the king of the Picts; it was restored by St Columba in 590 A.D.; at a subsequent period it became the metropolitan church, and was associated with the missionary work of St Adrian and his company. Its ancient Round Tower, built about 850 A.D., points to-day to its early and unique importance.

Its civil history led to its ecclesiastical history: in the Roman period it was most probably Ptolemy's Orrea, and while at a later period it was the capital of the Southern Pictish kingdom, it is also described by an early chronicler as the capital of the whole kingdom of the Picts ("totius regni Pictorum").¹ King Nectan, who gave it to "God and St Bride" in 460 A.D., is described as "king of all the provinces of the Picts."²

In its antiquity rests the difficulty of writing the early history of Abernethy, for much of it stretches back to a period of which there is sparse record: yet the investigations of many scholars have cast considerable light upon it, and with these in view the author has undertaken the history. It was one of his resolves on his ordination day in 1890 to write it, and his interest was directed towards it by a short address given on that occasion by his venerated friend, the late Alexander Laing, Esq., LL.D., of Newburgh. The author has studied its history during his leisure hours for the past seven years, both from the point of view of the early chronicles, and in the light of the researches of eminent scholars who have made such periods their special concern. He has been chiefly guided by Dr W. F. Skene and Dr Joseph Anderson—the former being his guide in the elucidation of the early documents, and the latter in the interpretation

¹ *Scotichronicon*, bk. iv. ch. xii.

² *Pictish Chronicle*—see p. 96 in text.

of the monuments and sculptured stones. He has also carefully studied the works of Dawkins, Wilson, Joyce, Lubbock, Tylor, Innes, Stuart, Robertson, Maxwell, Reeves, Patrick, Gomme, Lord Dunraven, Miss Stokes, Professor Stokes, Whitley Stokes, Rhys, Forbes, Bellesheim, Fraser, and others: in the light of their results the earlier chapters have been written.

The ancient church family of Abernethy ("ecclesiastica progenies") became a great historical family, acquiring a secular importance as their ecclesiastical dominion declined. Fordun and Wyntoun, prior of the old neighbouring foundation at St Serf's, were of great service, with the State and ecclesiastical records of the period. By marriage the Abernethies of Abernethy branched into the great Angus and Douglas family, the Rothes family, &c. During the medieval and subsequent periods the history of the parish has been traced from the Douglas charters, edited by Sir William Fraser, which cast light upon the Abernethy Priory and the later collegiate church, founded by Lord Douglas. The Acts of the Scottish Parliament, the Exchequer Rolls, the Register of the Royal Seal, the chartularies of Arbroath, and other historical works recently published, have also been carefully consulted.

The parish is interesting during the Reformation period, and its chronicles have been investigated and considered in their relationship to the general movements. The ancient records of the presbytery and parish have been very helpful, along with other works bearing upon the period.

Abernethy became one of the leading centres in the Secession of last century, and its minister, the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie, one of the leaders. In connection with this, while the official documents of the Church of Scotland have been published,

so also have been those of the Seceders, and especially those of the Secession Church in Abernethy. The documents (many of which are published for the first time) exhibit the spirit and object of the movement, as well as the historical conditions which were its environment. Along with other historical works, the publications of the Scottish History Society have been of service in the annals of the families associated with the parish. Throughout the work the author has endeavoured to be careful in acknowledging his obligations, and should he in any case have neglected to do so, it is an inadvertence he would much regret. As the work is more than a parish history, he has named it "An Historical Study." His explanation of this is, that the facts of the case demanded it. While Abernethy has had a distinctive history, it was yet the centre of a larger history.

The author here desires to express his indebtedness to the late Dr Laing, who offered him the use of notes which he had made on the subject. As he wished, however, to make a study of it for himself, he respectfully declined them; but he cannot allow this opportunity to pass without expressing not only his veneration for the memory of his friend, but also his appreciation of the encouragement received from him to go on with the work.

He is supremely indebted to Sir James Marwick, LL.D., F.R.S.E., for the indispensable help given in the elucidation of the Douglas charters and records, as well as for the photographs which he has kindly taken for the illustration of the book. Sir James also placed his extensive historical library at the writer's disposal. He has likewise to thank heartily W. L. Watson, Esq. of Ayton, Abernethy, who has all along shown a kindly interest in the work, and given him the use of many valuable books for consultation.

To Joseph Anderson, Esq., LL.D., of Edinburgh ; the Rev. Dr James Campbell of Balmerino ; the Rev. John Wilson, M.A., of Methven ; and the Rev. W. M. Macpherson, M.A., of Monymusk, the author's thanks are due for useful help. And he is also under obligation to the late Rev. Dr James Milne of the West Kirk, Perth, and the Rev. John Ferguson, B.D., the clerk of the Perth Presbytery, for the use of the transcripts of the records. He desires further to express his thanks to the Presbytery of Perth for granting him permission to consult the records and documents, as well as to the minister of the United Presbyterian Church for giving him access to his records. The Rev. Robert Stevenson of the Free Church, Abernethy, has also been most obliging.

The "Map illustrating the history of the Monastic Church prior to the eighth century," from Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' is reproduced by the kind permission of David Douglas, Esq., to whom the author tenders his hearty acknowledgments. He desires also to express his indebtedness to the subscribers, by whose kindness he has been enabled to publish the work.

But for the loss of the many monuments and documents belonging to the ancient church of Abernethy that perished at the Reformation period, and many of them probably at the transition from the Celtic to the Roman Catholic period, the work would have been more complete. It is vain now to express regret, and all that can be said and done is "*Colligite fragmenta, ne pereant.*"

D. BUTLER.

ERRATA.

- P. 12 (note ², l. 3), *for* "circle" *read* "sickle."
155, l. 20, *for* "nuncupabanatur" *read* "nuncupabantur."
162 (note, l. 8), *for* "Frazers" *read* "Frasers."
243, l. 18, *for* "toshach" *read* "toiseach."
282, l. 4, *for* "Lennox and Angus on the one hand," *read* "Lennox
on the one hand and Angus," &c.
380, l. 15, *for* "1747" *read* "1647."
386, l. 24, *for* "National League," &c., *read* "Solemn League."
441, l. 21, *for* "Rev. Ralph Erskine" *read* "Rev. Ebenezer Erskine."
449, l. 28, *for* "1475" *read* "1745."
473, l. 6, *for* "literateness" *read* "literalness."

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THE ANCIENT CHURCH AND PARISH OF ABERNETHY.

INTRODUCTION.

PERHAPS one of the finest features in the thought of the present day is the emphasis it has laid on the principle of development: it is now an accepted axiom that as the life of to-morrow will be conditioned by that of to-day, so the life of to-day is conditioned by that of yesterday. The idea of organic development has been applied with a success, which is the promise of still greater success, to all departments of thought; and it surrounds the past with an increasing interest to recall, that it conditions the present, and that the present can be best understood in the light of the past out of which it grows, and by which it has come to be what it is. Civilisation, while largely affected by the forces that are at work in the life of to-day, is to a considerable degree the product of the past—the outcome of what living men, who have come and gone before us, thought, said, and did. The past rules us not the less potently when we are unconscious of its influence, and so a healthy form of thought, while prospective, ought also to be retrospective: while it sees “the distant gates of Eden gleam,” ought also to consider the conditions that have helped to make the Eden possible. In the

words of Principal Caird: "Every step by which the consciousness of mankind has emerged from the life of nature and from the rudest primitive notions of itself and the world up to its present point of advancement, lives in the present consciousness of the race, transmuted but not annihilated."¹

The increase of interest, then, in historical subjects that is in many quarters giving evidence of its existence cannot but be regarded as one of the healthy signs of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Historical interest is always fascinating in itself and fraught with practical good; it is not only speculative but essentially beneficial in its influence; it lessens the passions of the hour and clears the eyesight; it enables us to distinguish between what is permanent and what is accidental; it fixes our attention upon the main current of progress, and forbids us attaching undue importance to side-issues and details. In all the branches of man's manifold life, time has been power, and in order to understand the present we must first of all study the past that has helped to make it what it is. It has been well said: "History, while scientific in method, should pursue a practical object. That is, it should not merely gratify the reader's curiosity about the past, but modify his view of the present and his forecast of the future. . . . Politics are vulgar when they are not liberalised by history, and history fades into mere literature when it loses sight of its relation to practical politics."²

Again, not only is this historical spirit manifesting itself on the larger plane of the national life, but also on the smaller plane of the ancient village community, tribe, and parish. And well will this be, if in the study of the particular we do not forget to look at it in the light of the general; if in regarding the unit, we do not forget that it is organically related to other units; if in studying the parochial and mastering its details, we do not neglect

¹ *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 308.

² *The Expansion of England*, pp. 1 and 174.

to maintain a true historical perspective and a wider outlook. Detachment is hurtful to a true estimate of things when it ends with that which is detached; detachment is helpful when the study of the particular leads to a fuller knowledge of the general, when the parochial attitude is broadened by a wider outlook that realises the larger life organically related to it. There have often been in the parish forces that have visibly affected the life of the nation, and guided the course of its development, and this because they have started there as a centre, but affected a much wider area as their circumference. What goes on in the world of men is well illustrated by the geological forces that work slowly and invisibly in the world of nature, and it has been thus expressed by Sir Archibald Geikie:—

The story of the origin of our scenery shows that in the grander revolutions of the world as well as in the humbler routine of daily life, it is the little changes which by their cumulative effects bring about the greatest results; that the lowly offices of wind and rain, springs and frost, snow and ice, trifling as they may appear, have nevertheless been chosen as instruments to mould the giant-framework of the mountains; and that these seemingly feeble agents have yet been able, in the long lapse of still untold ages, to produce the widest diversity of scenery, and to do this, not with the havoc and ruin of earthquake and convulsion, but with a finely-balanced harmony and order, forming out of the very waste of the land a kindly soil, which bears year by year its mantle of green, yielding food to the beast of the field and the fowl of the air, and ministering to the wants and enjoyment of man.¹

Geology teaches that the configuration of the land has been caused by the daily working of the ordinary, everyday causes, and there is a parallel to this in the life of man. His constant strivings to satisfy his needs and overcome the resistance of external conditions, both by individual effort and combination, throughout the centuries, have led to the rich complex social life of to-day; and so it will ever be interesting to study his early efforts, for they

¹ Scenery and Geology of Scotland, p. 352.

contain the possibilities of later things, and imply the end, of which, humble although they be, they are still the certain promise. This is what may be done by an investigation into the life of the ancient parishes, and they afford limited areas, within which we may more closely, and on that account more exactly, study the influences that have been at work in the formation of the life of the nation, or find reflected in them what moves the life of man everywhere. The parish would be an interesting unit, if we could only know its past, and very many of our parishes have an interest which is by no means local.

Those acquainted with village life in Scotland can hail with pleasure the evidence of a growing interest in antiquities, which forms a distinctively new departure. There is unquestionably a feeling of respect abroad, quite distinct from superstition, for the relics and monuments of former ages, and it is true to say that "within the last fifty years a new interest, almost like another sense, has arisen in our ancient monuments of art."¹

There is much connected with this parish that is worthy of being preserved, and it is with this conviction that the present work is undertaken.

¹ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, p. 142 (quoted).

CHAPTER I.

PREHISTORIC: A SKETCH OF THE EARLY PEOPLE AND CULTURE.

IN the present chapter an attempt will be made to describe the stages of early culture, as they have been ascertained by specialists in this department of investigation. Archæologists give us certain results from an examination of the articles early man has left behind him on the soil, and a definite conception of the early inhabitants of the country. We give their general conclusions, made interesting to us as interpretations of the prehistoric remains that are preserved in the National Museum, Edinburgh, and were found within the parish boundary from time to time.¹

The implements of the "river-drift men" have been found in the gravelly deposits at rivers' banks, and they carry us back to a race of nomadic hunters, dependent entirely upon what they could acquire by their superior cunning over the beasts of the field and the fowl of the air. Their implements are called by scholars palæolithic, and among their contemporaries in Britain were the lion, elk, reindeer, urus, bison, cave-bear, horse, elephant, and mammoth. Remains of the urus were lately discovered in this parish at Mugdrum.²

The second race has been called the "cave-men." They show an

¹ The articles referred to are thus marked in the Museum cases at Edinburgh: A. H. 5; A. H. 61; A. H. 90; A. H. 57; A. S. 27; A. S. 74; A. S. 42; B. S. 123; D. A. 37; D. L. 4, &c.

² See Laing's Lindores Abbey and the Burgh of Newburgh, p. 2.

advance in culture, and consequently their implements exhibit a greater variety than those of the "river-drift men." These consist of arrow-heads, javelin-heads, awls, pins, and needles. They caught birds in snares, lived largely on fish, had fur clothes, stitched by needles with sinews, obtained fire by rubbing wood, and had no domestic animals.¹ Professor Boyd Dawkins says of this latter race: "It may be gathered that the Eskimos are probably the representatives of the cave-men, and protected within the Arctic circle from those causes by which they have been driven from Europe and Asia. They stand at the present day wholly apart from all other races, and are cut off from all both by the philologist and the craniologist. Unaccustomed to war themselves, they were probably driven from Europe and Asia by other tribes, in the same manner as within the last century they have been driven farther north by the attacks of the Red Indian."²

It may with certainty be said that there are three stages through which mankind must have passed on their way towards a tribal society—the hunting, the pastoral, the agricultural. The outstanding feature of the river-drift and cave-men is the nomadic one; but, "man is a social being,"³ and society even in its primitive form is a necessity for self-defence and protection. On the way towards this, or rather in the very effort to realise the contents of his own nature, there was a long development, in which we find man endeavouring to rise superior to his environment; and in his progress in art and agriculture, science has defined three stages, as the Stone, the Bronze, and the Iron Ages. These are not necessarily chronological: they may coexist side by side; they may be different strata in the same period; still the division is helpful, and intelligible as long as we regard it as a succession of different stages in culture or civilisation. This classification has introduced the prin-

¹ See succinct account in 'Scotland in Prehistoric Times,' by Charles Annandale, M.A., LL.D.

² Early Man in Early Britain, p. 242.

³ Politics, ch. i.

ciple of order into archæology, and enabled it as a science to be treated in the line of organic development. By examining the monuments and relics of the three periods we are able to arrive at an intelligent idea of the life of early man.

In prehistoric times the climate would be much damper and more moist than at present; the country would be covered with large forests and continuous morasses; in fact, Strathearn, in the east end of which Abernethy is situated, would be one continuous marsh, with forests on either side of it and intersecting it. The reindeer and elk, with other large animals, would be roaming through them, and it is only when we compare lovely Strathearn of to-day with Strathearn as it then existed, that we can understand what advances man has made, and appreciate the initial endeavours that led to such great results. The first people of whom anything definite is known, are those of the neolithic stage in the Stone Age. Their relics are called neolithic because they are polished, and of these many fine specimens from Abernethy are to be seen in the Museum at Edinburgh. They are mostly arrow-heads, and reveal to us a race of men who lived by hunting, and probably were frequently at war with each other. The work of this primitive man reveals capacity, and probably at this stage communities were formed. They had to some extent outlived the nomadic, and had attained to a pastoral or perhaps to an agricultural state of existence. Dr Anderson finds in their sepulchral remains a type of construction which is "completely structural," and characterised by a passage of access. He sums up his examination thus: "Their contents disclose to a certain extent the life and culture of the people. They possessed the same domestic animals as we still possess, and kept dogs and hunted the reindeer. Their common weapons were bows with flint-pointed arrows, and battle-axes of polished stone. They made pottery of a dark-coloured, thin, and hard-baked paste. The vessels, though not thrown on the wheel, were finely shaped, wide-mouthed, round-bottomed, and thick-lipped, often bevelled

outwardly and recurving over the vertical rim, which was usually highly ornamented. Their system of ornament was simple, consisting of shallow flutings or scorings in straight lines arranged in groups, contrasting as to their direction or markings with the finger-nail."¹ Britain at this time was separated from the Continent, and if we believe that these neolithic builders came thence by boats we get a picture of early man as already possessed of considerable skill in construction, and feeling his way onwards to better things.

In the charming picture of this simple life as given by Professor Boyd Dawkins, a clear conception is obtainable of how men lived in the hills and forests around this ancient parish, as in other parts of the land :—

If we could in imagination take a stand on the summit of a hill commanding an extensive view of almost any part of Great Britain or Ireland in the neolithic period, we should look upon a landscape somewhat of this kind. These lines of smoke rising from among the trees of the dense virgin forest at our feet would mark the position of a neolithic homestead and of the neighbouring stockaded camp which afforded refuge in time of need ; while here and there a gleam of corn would show the small patch of ripening wheat. We enter a track in the forest and thread our way to one of the clusters of homesteads, passing herds of goats and flocks of horned sheep, or disturbing a troop of horses or small short-horned oxen, or stumbling upon a swineherd tending the hogs in their search after roots. We should probably have to defend ourselves against the attack of some of the large dogs, used as guardians of the flock against bears, wolves, and foxes, and for hunting the wild animals. At last, on emerging into the clearing, we should see a little plot of flax or small-eared wheat, and near the homestead the inhabitants clad some in linen and others in skins, and ornamented with necklaces and pendants of stone, bone, or pottery, carrying on their daily occupations. Some are cutting wood with stone axes with a wonderfully sharp edge, fixed in wooden handles, with stone adzes and gouges, or with little saws composed of carefully notched pieces of flint about 3 or 4 inches long. . . . Some are at work preparing handles for the spears, shafts for the arrows, and wood for the bows or for the broad paddles used for propelling the canoes. Others are busy grinding and

¹ Scotland in Pagan Times : Bronze and Stone Ages, p. 304.

sharpening the various stone tools, scraping skins with instruments ground to a circular edge, or carving various implements out of bone and antler with sharp splinters of flint, while the women are preparing the meal with pestles and mortars and grain-rubbers, and cooking it on the fire, generally outside the house, or spinning thread with spindle and distaff, or weaving it with a rude loom. We might also have seen them at work at the moulding of rude cups and vessels out of clay which had been carefully prepared."¹

To think of this primitive life with its simple aims and absence of luxury—to recall that probably its most interesting features are lost to us, because there was no Hesiod or Homer to preserve them in song; to see their reverence for their departed ancestors as expressed in the simple cairns they erected—is to be brought sympathetically into contact with an early people of whom we would willingly know more.

This early race existed here long before Celtic or even Roman influence touched them. Their legends are most likely preserved in our folk-lore; their language absorbed, but yet not lost, in our modern speech; their customs are not eliminated, but exist as unconscious survivals in much that is modern; many of the superstitions of earlier centuries not yet wholly obliterated, still surviving in village life, through the indestructibility and potent force of tradition,—are all due to the fact that this pre-Celtic people were once on the soil, and did not pass away without leaving their influence behind them.²

They were of Iberian or Basque race, of small stature, of dark complexion, with black hair and eyes, with dolichocephalic skull.³

We now pass to the Bronze and Iron Ages, which unquestionably point to the invasions of new tribes, the contact of the insular with a larger culture, and the assimilation of the latter by the

¹ *Early Man in Early Britain*, pp. 271-273.

² See 'The Village Community,' by G. L. Gomme, pp. 290-295.

³ "The Iberic peoples lived in Britain, secure from invasion, during the whole of the Neolithic Age, while Gaul and Spain were being conquered by the ancestors of the Celts of history."—*Early Man in Early Britain*, p. 342.

former, or, in some places, the substitution of the latter for the former. The two periods are probably to be accounted for by the different incursions of Celtic tribes, whose direction seems mostly to have been westward; they crossed from the Continent to Britain in search of wealth, and followed out the wandering, communicative instincts of their nature. Says Mr Kidd: "The law of life has been always the same from the beginning; ceaseless and inevitable struggle and competition; ceaseless and inevitable selection and rejection; ceaseless and inevitable progress." "The first prominent feature which we have everywhere to notice in groups and associations of primitive men is their military character. In whatever portion of the world savage man has been met with, he is engaged in continuous warfare. The great business in the life of the society to which he belongs is always war with other societies of the same kind."¹ When we recall, too, that even in an advanced culture like that of to-day, progress is ever accompanied with the sound of conflict, we have less cause to be astonished that warfare should characterise much earlier times. At any rate, the quiet isolated people of Iberian blood were invaded by the incursions of Celtic population, and were either driven northward into the fastness of the mountains, enslaved, or exterminated. This invasion led to the introduction of the second² and third periods (although many centuries were between them), when bronze and iron were the metals respectively in use. The general opinion about the Celts is that they came from Gaul, and were kin to several of the European races that have played an important part in history. They were possessed with the nerve, energy, and enthusiasm that made them conquerors wherever they went. "The one section is known as the Goidelic, the other as the Brythonic; and while the first now

¹ Social Evolution, pp. 39, 45.

² "The Celts brought the knowledge of bronze into Britain."—Early Man in Early Britain, p. 349.

embraces the Gaels or Highlanders of Scotland, the Manx, and the Irish Celts, the second includes the Welsh, the Bretons, and the Celts of Cornwall. It is generally believed that the Celts who first entered Britain belonged to the Goidelic group, and that at some succeeding period these were followed by Brythonic Celts, who pushed the earlier settlers into other parts of the island, and perhaps then first brought about the Celtic colonisation of Ireland.”¹

It is worthy of note that just as a mixture of Iberian with Celtic blood in Western Europe gave rise to a warlike race called the Celtiberi, whom the Romans found most difficult to conquer, so it was in Britain. The Caledonians who dwelt north of the Forth were unquestionably the same as their relatives the Celtiberi, and always resisted Roman domination, and finally gained the freedom of Britain. At any rate, that this population existed in the part of Strathearn near Abernethy cannot be questioned, for there can be traced in the place-names a small element of Iberian and a preponderating element of Celtic words.

The Celtic people of the Bronze Age, like the Iberian people, had a respect for their dead ancestors, and it is from the relics which are found within their tombs that we get to know them best. Their burial area was surrounded by a circle of standing-stones, remains of which are probably to be found here in the field called the “Licher-Stanes,” and possibly at the standing cairn on Drumcairn Hill.² In former centuries these may have been

¹ Scotland in Prehistoric Times, by C. Annandale, M.A., LL.D., p. 20.

² Edmund Spenser refers to these as existing in Ireland at his own day, and thus writes of them: “Besides these two sortes of hilles, there were aunciently diverse others; for some were rayseed, where there had bene a greate battayll fought, as a memorye or trophee thereof; others, as monumentes of burialls of the carcasses of all those that were slayne in any fight, upon whom they did throwe up such rounde mountes, as memorialls for them, and sometimes did cast up greate heapes of stones, as ye maie reade in many places of the Scripture, and otherwhiles they did throwe upp many round heapes of earth in a circle, like a garland, or pitch manie longe stones on ende in compasse, every of which (they say) betokened some worthy person of note there slayne and buried: for this was theyr ancient custome, before Christianitye came in amongst them that churchyardes were inclosed.”—A View of the Present State of Ireland, p. 643.

common here, but the progress of agriculture in such a rich soil as this throughout the centuries has been the means of sweeping away many old historical landmarks, and among them the standing-stones. Very likely these stone circles would also be used as temples of worship, for men from the earliest days have always had a predisposition to worship at the place where rests the dust of their forefathers. They have been called the Canterbury and Westminster of an early worship.¹

This reverence for the dead, and the costly ornaments and weapons placed within the urn or grave-chest, show that the Celts had conceptions of a future life. Their idea was that the future, while better than the present, would in some mysterious way be a continuation of the present, and so they deemed it unworthy of their filial piety that their fathers should pass into the happy hunting-grounds unequipped. Beneath the superstition there was a fine feeling, and the erection of these stone circles speaks to us of social combination and co-operation, which are the evidences of a tribal society united together by a common bond of kinship, religion, law, tradition, and property. The stone circles formed, too, the meeting-place of the early tribe for the administration of justice.

One feature of the Bronze Period² had an important bearing on the face of the country. It was begun in the Bronze, and continued throughout the Iron Age—the clearing away of forest and marsh. The beginning of such a movement is worthy of notice ;

¹ Professor Boyd Dawkins : *Early Man in Britain*, p. 376.

² An example of the bronze leaf-shaped sword, made by casting in a mould and all of one piece, while the cutting edge has a convex curve, has been found at Abernethy ; there is also a fine specimen of the socketed circle, found in the Tay between Errol and Abernethy, which shows that the reapers of the Bronze Age did not cut the straw down to the root as is done to-day, but lopped off the tops from the straw right under the ears. Dr Anderson is of opinion that such must have been manufactured in Scotland, for “(1) in many cases they exhibit varieties of form which are peculiar to Scotland, and (2) the moulds themselves are found in the soil in which the objects are found.”—*Scotland in Pagan Times : Bronze and Stone Ages*, p. 226.

man has already begun to assert his superiority over nature by bending nature to his design and purpose ; he had acquired the implements to assist him in this work, and the use of them in removing marsh and forest gradually but surely modified the moist climate and made it more agreeable to human life. Strathearn must have immensely benefited in healthfulness and fertility through the improvements rendered possible by the superior implements then used. No one is more able to speak on this subject than Sir Archibald Geikie :—

Man has uprooted old forests, drained many of the mosses, and extirpated or thinned many of the wild animals of ancient Caledonia. In place of the woods and bogs he has planted fields and gardens, and built villages and towns ; instead of wild beasts of the chase, he has covered the hills and valleys with flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. The cutting down of the forests and the draining of the mosses has doubtless tended to reduce the rainfall and generally to lessen the moisture of the atmosphere and improve the climate. Sunlight has been let in upon the waste places of the land, and the latent fertility of the soil has been called forth ; so that over the same regions, which in Roman times were so dark and inhospitable, so steeped in dark mists and vapours, and so invested with beasts of prey, there now stretch the rich champaign of the Lothians, the cultivated plains of Forfar, Perth, and Stirling, and the mingling fields and gardens and woodland that fill the fair valley of the Tweed, from the grey Moorfoots and Lammermuirs far up into the heart of the Cheviots.

Continues the same author :—

In effecting these changes man has introduced an element of change which has extended through both animate and inanimate nature. He has ameliorated the climate, and by so doing has affected the agencies of waste that are wearing down the surface of the land. The rivers are probably now a good deal less in size than they were even in the days of the Romans, and there may be fewer runnels and streamlets. The old mosses acted as vast sponges, collecting the rain that fell upon them or soaked into them from the neighbouring slopes, and feeding with a constant supply the brown peaty rivulets that carried their surplus waters to the lower grounds. The evaporation from these wide swampy flats could not but be extensive, and the rainfall was thus, in all likelihood, proportionately great. But the clearing

away of the forests and of the peat-mosses has removed one chief source alike of the rivulets and of the rain. . . . Draining, again, sends rain into the rivers. Hence the latter swell and fall again more rapidly than they used to do. . . . Man has altered the character of the vegetation over wide districts, driving away plants of one kind, such as the heaths, to put in their stead those of another type, like the cereals. . . . The coming of man has worked mighty transformations in the animal world. . . . He has waged incessant war against those which he considers injurious to his interest. . . . He has set in motion a series of changes, which has reacted on each other in countless circles, both through the organic and inorganic world.¹

These words of Sir Archibald Geikie show what an important and far-reaching change man has made upon the contour and character of the country, and what was begun when he learned the use of bronze, was carried on with greater efficiency when he learned the use of iron. The Iron Age probably commenced in Scotland two or three centuries before the Roman invasion, and as Abernethy distinctly comes into prominence as one of the towns mentioned by Ptolemy, it is important to grasp a clear idea of the life and work of the people in this district before that period. Tacitus describes the Caledonians as being armed with long swords without points, and iron would be used in the construction of the war-chariots. It has been emphasised by Dr Anderson that between the Bronze and the Iron Pagan Period there is the development of a distinctively native art, and that the relics of the Iron Age indicate an advanced state of "culture, civilisation, and social organisation"; "that they are distinguished by beauty of form, balance of parts, and harmonious combination"; that there is in Scottish soil "a separate development, marked by a distinct individuality of character"; "that it differs from the art of the Christian period, and has no interlaced work, no meanders or key-patterns or fretwork, and no similitude of foliage or foliaceous scrolls. It is zoomorphic; but its zoomorphism is chiefly apparent

¹ Scenery and Geology of Scotland, pp. 336-339.

in the forms of the objects, and seldom exhibited in the designs with which they are decorated.”¹

There is manifested in the works of this period an æsthetical faculty, that expressed itself in a distinctively native art, which the Celtic Church did not afterwards suppress but educated by placing before it an object worthy of its true devotion and consecration.

The Bronze and Iron Ages in Scotland overlap each other, and the transition from the one to the other must have been very gradual. If, however, weight is to be attached to the statement of Tacitus, iron was most likely known in Scotland for a considerable period before the Roman invasion. The number of weapons found speaks of the constant tribal struggles that must have characterised the lives of the ancient Caledonians; still it is pleasant to have evidence of the existence of recreation amongst them, and to know that while they were so busy with war, they yet had some time for amusement and the chase. I refer to the discovery of round stone balls in this district, the elaborate ornamentation on which forbids us to suppose that they were used as corn-crushers, and suggests as more than probable that they were employed in games and amusements. Dr Anderson thinks it at least conceivable that they may have been mounted as mace-heads, similar to the metal ones with pyramidal projections that belong to the Iron Age, and continued in use in the early middle ages.² With one exception, they are limited to Scottish soil, and their distribution is over the whole area of Scotland. Their ornamentation is not that of the fully developed Celtic type of even early Christian times, and so they are regarded as belonging to the Pagan Period. We see in them the desire to make things not only useful, but beautiful, and about the makers of them we can at least say, that they were more than savages.

While we get to know the inhabitants of the Bronze Age by their

¹ Scotland in Pagan Times : Iron Age, by Dr Joseph Anderson, pp. 172, 173.

² Ibid., pp. 170, 171.

tombs and the relics found within them, we get to know the inhabitants of the Iron Pagan Period by their architecture. What they leave behind is not merely the tombs of the dead, but the abodes of the living¹—(1) Hill-forts, (2) Crannogs, (3) Brochs, (4) Earth-houses.

As to the hill-forts, we must recall that at the Iron Pagan Period Strathearn would be one continuous forest and marsh-land, intersected here and there with human settlements, and as the early inhabitants were subject at all times to the attack of wild beasts and neighbouring predatory tribes, fortifications were a necessity for their defence and protection. These forts fall into four classes, according as they are built (1) of earth, or (2) of earth and stone, or (3) of unbuilt stone, or (4) of dry masonry.² They are generally circular or oval, and are often to be found on high places that are susceptible of cultivation. Several of them in former days must have been fenced with palisades—sometimes, again, with trenches. They frequently consist of three or more concentric circumvallations around the brow of a hill, and are also to be found vitrified. As very few of them have wells within them, it is clear that they could not have been originally intended as fixed places of abode, but rather as places of refuge in times of war. The cold of the hills, too, seems to be against the idea that they could be places of residence for any length of time, so that we must either regard them as places of defence, or as temples connected with some religious rites, of which now we know nothing at all.³ Probably

¹ Anderson's *Scotland in Pagan Times : Iron Age*, p. 36.

² See Dr Anderson and Dr Annandale.

³ Mountain-tops seem to have been chosen by the early Norwegians in Scotland as a place of sepulture, and they erected over the graves barrows or tumuli. In Scotland, as in Scandinavia, they are met with "mostly on hills, and near the firths or sea-coasts, whence there is an uninterrupted view of the sea. To the ancient Northman it was evidently an almost insufferable thought to be buried in a confined or remote corner, where nobody could see his grave or be reminded of his deeds. The greater chief a man was, the more did he desire that his 'barrow' should lie high and unenclosed, so that it might be visible to all who travelled by land and by sea. United with this desire to live in the memory of posterity, the Viking certainly also indulged the secret belief that his spirit, or ghost, would at times arise from the barrow to look out upon that beloved sea, and to refresh

their *raison d'être* may be found in a combination of both ideas. Remains of forts made of stone and earth are to be found on Balmanno Hill and several of the other hills in this district, as well as on the Castle Law, which may have been an early fortification of the Iberians, and refortified by the inhabitants of this district at the Roman and Danish invasions. On several of the other hills in this district—such as the Black Cairn, Clachard Craig, and Norman's Law—traces of these fortifications are still to be seen, and all point to the east end of Strathearn as the abode of vigorous, warlike, courageous tribes; and while many of their monuments and fortifications have disappeared through agriculturists, fence-builders, and wall-builders using the material near at hand for their immediate purpose, we cannot fail to see, from what still remains, that the account of Tacitus as to the bravery of the Caledonians is not exaggerated; nor can we wonder at Agricola and his successors being constantly in dread of such a courageous people.¹

Another characteristic of the Pagan Iron Age, and probably of an age long subsequent to it, was the crannogs or lake-dwellings. They were generally built of timber, and constructed on an island,

itself, after the gloomy closeness of the grave, with the cool breezes which play upon its bosom."—The Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland, by J. J. A. Worsaae, p. 242.

¹ The finest preserved specimens of such early forts are to be seen on the Aran Islands, off the coast of Galway, and the examination of them is more than sufficient to repay the fatigue of the long journey. Photographic views of them, with descriptive notes, will be found in Lord Dunraven's 'Notes on Irish Architecture' (vol. i.)

Dun Aengus, on the Greater Island of Aran, consists of three large concentric walls: the interior of the inmost one is 142 feet wide by 150 feet long; the middle one 210 feet by 300 feet; the outer one is distant from the middle one at the south by an area of 640 feet, and at the north-east by an area of 393 feet. The average thickness of the inmost wall is 13 feet, and the average height 18 feet. The western side has a sea-frontage of 1500 feet long.

An interesting feature is the *chevaux de frise*, consisting of long narrow stones, set on end and sloping towards each other, to apprise the people in times of defence of the approach of an enemy. A pilgrimage to Aran will give the traveller a realistic conception of what our early Scottish forts must at one time have also been.

which was itself a construction. They formed a protection from the wild animals, and could only be approached by those sufficiently well informed of the district. Remains of such were recently found at Lochleven, and they may probably have been common in this neighbourhood. No one can read Dr Munro's very interesting volume on this subject and not be persuaded that they were at one time the scene of a busy life. "There can hardly be any doubt," says our author, "that Roman civilisation had come into contact with the lake-dwellers and partially moulded their habits. The Celtic element is, however, strongly developed, not only in the general character of many of the industrial implements of stone, bone, and iron, but also in the style of art manifested in some of the ornamental objects included in the collection."¹

Two other types of building, one of which belonged to the period of the Roman invasion and the other to the period subsequent to it—earth-houses and brochs—would be numerous in a district like this, although all vestiges of them have now been swept away. They are both distinctively Celtic, while the broch is peculiar to Scotland. Dr Anderson points out that we not only in this period possess a distinctively native art in monuments, but also a school of architecture, marked by an unmistakable individuality.² These brochs consist of a large circular wall, with chambers in the thickness of it, and the windows of these chambers look towards the central court, where there was generally a well. Like the round towers, which were erected subsequent to them, they were intended for defence and passive resistance; and in the days when the bow and arrow were the chief weapons of attack, they would admirably serve their purpose, and afford the people not only shelter, but also the means of defending themselves for a considerable period, while they were impregnable against fire. The round tower of the Celtic church shows the persistence of this

¹ Ancient Scottish Lake-Dwellings, p. 277.

² Scotland in Pagan Times: Iron Age, p. 209.

type, and seems to be the idea of the broch, modified and adapted for ecclesiastical purposes. Just as the round towers were erected to resist the attacks of the Danes, who approached the early churches for plunder, so these brochs were raised for protection against the early Scandinavian pirates.

In the earth-houses, consisting each of a long, curved, somewhat narrow gallery, with sides and roof of stone, we have another instance of the development of architecture, although it is more primitive than that of the broch. They are all underground, and seem to correspond with the German granaries mentioned by Tacitus.¹ While used as storehouses for grain, it is not unlikely that they would also be places of refuge in time of attack, only easy of access to those acquainted with the district, and that they may also have been dwelling-places or retreats during the cold winters that must have then characterised this climate.

These structures have also a distinctively Celtic feature, and with the antiquities found in them reveal a people whose individuality was not suppressed by contact with the superior Roman culture, but was strong and vigorous enough to maintain its own distinctiveness.

Such is a description of the forts, crannogs, earth-houses, and brochs, that were in this district about the time of the Roman invasion by Agricola. They disabuse the mind of the idea that history only begins in Britain with the Roman period. Archæology has a different story to tell us, and a story which is not subjective but objective; which is not the outcome of fancy, but of observation on the evidence of the antiquities found upon the soil. Probably the work of Tacitus is more of a panegyric upon Agricola than exact history, but now that archæology has become a science, we can see that the bulk of the Caledonians, while courageous and warlike, had made considerable advance towards an organised life, and its message goes far to modify the statements of Cæsar and Tacitus. For many centuries before the

¹ Germania, c. xvi.

appearance of the Romans there was progressing a native culture. While a nomadic population would be wandering about like flotsam and jetsam on the main current, we cannot doubt that the bulk of the people had got beyond the nomadic and settled into an agricultural and a pastoral life. They were busy with the chase, but they were also engaged in the tending of their flocks and the cultivation of their patches of ground.

The knowledge we now possess that they used corn in the preparation of their food is not unimportant here. "Mankind," says Mr Morgan, "are the only beings who may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food, which at the outset they did not possess over other animals." He emphasises that "unlimited subsistence is possible through field agriculture," and adds that "prior to field agriculture, it is not probable that half a million people were developed and held together in any part of the earth. If exceptions occurred, they must have resulted from pastoral life on the plain or from horticulture improved by irrigation under peculiar and exceptional circumstances."¹ The people north of the Forth seem to have reached this agricultural stage, and also to have been very numerous, from the account of Tacitus: if they had but possessed the knowledge of an alphabet, they might have been able to tell us their own story. As it is, we are dependent on their weapons, ornaments, and monuments for its interpretation, and assuredly such do not bring them before us as savages.

¹ Ancient Society, p. 27.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROMAN PERIOD: WICKS OF BAIGLIE—ORREA.

THE Historical Period dawns with the Roman invasion of Scotland, and Scotland makes its appearance in history at a later date than other countries. Pytheas the Massilian is said to have visited the East Coast and sailed as far as the Orkneys in about 400 B.C.¹ In the fourth century the two principal islands are called by Aristotle Albion and Ierne.² Herodotus alludes to them as the Cassiterides or Tin Islands, and probably knowledge of them reached him through the Phœnician traders;³ but it was when the Roman legions landed on the British shores, and were brought into contact with British people, that we learn anything particular about the inhabitants, and their existence becomes to Roman writers a fact, and ceases to be a geographical speculation. The conquests of Julius Cæsar (B.C. 55) were limited in area, and did not extend beyond England, and it is in 78 A.D. that we learn anything definite about the Caledonians who lived north of the Forth. At the arrival of Agricola as governor, the limit of the Roman province seems to have been the Solway on the north-west, and probably the Forth on the north-east. Agricola was the first general who carried the campaign farther north and penetrated into the country of the Caledonian Britons. He seems to have been a great general, and to have had large views of policy which conciliated and improved

¹ Strabo, *Geog.*, lib. ii.² Aristot., *De Mundo*, iii.³ Her., iii. 115.

the south. He evidently established among them a government characterised by justice and moderation, and having produced comparative peace in the district south of the Forth, carried his invasion into the district north of it.

In A.D. 80 he entered the country north of the Forth, where he found "new nations" ("novas gentes aperuit"), and ravaged the country as far north as the Tavaus or Tay. His course seems to have been through Annandale, the Clyde Strath, through Lanarkshire, thence to Strathearn by the ford of the Forth at Stirling, through the pass of the Ochils formed by the glen of the river Allan.¹ Throughout that district he planted forts (one of which is near this parish at Ardargie) with Ardoch as their terminus, where was the camp of his army. In A.D. 81 he fortified the isthmus between the Clyde and Forth; and from A.D. 83-86 he carried on a series of warfares against the natives north of the Forth, while his fleet sailed round the coast of Fife into the Firth of Tay, no doubt striking terror into the natives who lived along the coast-line, and spreading it through them to their neighbours of the interior. Probably his army was encamped on the bank of the Tay opposite Perth, called the Grassy Wells, and here the fleet joined them, for the Tay is not navigable beyond Kinnoul. Thence he penetrated northward towards the Grampians, and somewhere there won the battle of "Mons Granpius" in A.D. 86. The slaughter of the natives was very great; still they were evidently not the men to be daunted, and after his victory Agricola thought it better to retrace his course, crossed the Tay, and marched southwards through the country of the Horesti. After obtaining hostages from them, and a treaty, he returned to winter south of the Forth and Clyde. At the same time he directed his fleet to proceed northward, and they seem to have coasted round Britain, discovering and conquering the Orcades, which they regarded as the mysterious Thule. After their long voyage they returned to

¹ See Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. p. 45.

the Forth and joined the army there; and altogether the work of Agricola resulted in a general knowledge of the north, and would no doubt have led to further warfare, had not Agricola been recalled by the jealous Domitian to Rome. When the firm discipline of the general was withdrawn, the northern tribes regained their independence and became more united in their hostility towards the common foe.

Now that campaign and that voyage have a direct interest for this district. Tacitus tells us that as they somewhere saw the Tay and the large flat strath through which it flows, the soldiers exclaimed, "Ecce Tiber! Ecce Campus Martius!" It is a matter of controversy where the point would be where they uttered these words, and the part of the country to which reference is made. The western side of Abernethy converges towards the end of the Ochil Hills, and Sir Walter Scott fixes the scene near it, at the Wicks of Baiglie. In the 'Fair Maid of Perth' Sir Walter says:—

Perth, so eminent for the beauty of its situation, is a place of great antiquity, and old tradition assigns to the town the importance of a Roman foundation. That victorious nation, it is said, pretended to recognise the Tiber in the much more magnificent and navigable Tay, and to acknowledge the large level space, well known by the name of the North Inch, as having a near resemblance to the Campus Martius.¹

He continues:—

One of the most beautiful points of view which Britain, or perhaps the world, can afford, is, or rather we may say was, the prospect from a spot called the Wicks of Baiglie, being a species of niche at which the traveller arrived, after a long stage from Kinross, through a waste and uninteresting country, and from which, as forming a pass over the summit of a ridgy eminence which he had gradually surmounted, he beheld, stretching beneath him, the valley of the Tay, traversed by its ample and lordly stream; the town of Perth with its two large meadows or Inches, its steeples and its towers; the hills of Moncrieff and Kinnoull faintly rising into

¹ Chap. i.

picturesque rocks, partly clothed with woods ; the rich margin of the river, studded with elegant mansions ; and the distant view of the huge Grampian mountains, the northern screen of this exquisite landscape.

In Note B of the Appendix Sir Walter publishes the letter of "a distinguished local antiquary" calling the accuracy of this description in question, and suggesting a point a little westward on the road from Kinross to the church of Dron.

This point cannot be identified, and it is just possible that what suggested to the Romans the Campus Martius and the Tiber may have been the eastern part of Strathearn and the Carse of Gowrie, with the Tay widening towards the Firth as they are to be seen from West Dron.

Those who are familiar with the lovely panorama will not deem this impossible, and those familiar with the Campus Martius assure me that it is more than probable. If this be so, Sir Walter is correct, or nearly correct, in identifying the spot where the Romans exclaimed, "Ecce Tiber ! Ecce Campus Martius !" and only incorrect in applying it to Perth and not to the Tay valley as seen from this part of the Ochils. A finely sympathetic description of the view from the Clochrath Law has been given in a recent volume by Mr Halliburton : he calls it a "Forgotten Road and a Famous View," and as it is of interest in connection with the question now raised, we venture to give it :—

The main body and middle of your picture is that point of Perthshire where Strathearn approaches to unite with the grander Strath of Tay. It is a view of rich level lands, . . . through which wind in shining links the stately waters. It realises as far as anything in northern latitudes can the scene which Lot surveyed when 'he lifted up his eyes and beheld the plain of Jordan, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt.' The eyes never tire of dwelling on the view, but no inconsiderable part of the charm of this lovely low-lying landscape is the setting. Eastward the German Ocean glances a welcome to Tay round a pine-clad hill which hides Pictish Abernethy ; northwards, over the firs and crags of Moncrieff and Callerfountain which curtain Perth, stands the great Highland rampart of

the Grampians with their clear, etherealised outlines, and their dim glens, and Schiehallion their advance guard westward, over bare Baigley and Balmanno the sky-line is fretted with the dark peaks of Ben Lomond and Ben Ledi and the rough turbulence of the West Highlands. The scene, of course, is northward, with a semicircle of horizon for boundary. Southward there is little to take the eye, but the back of the Lomonds and the sullen brows of Benarty.¹

There is another interest belonging to the district in connection with this invasion of Agricola. We have already seen that after the battle of Mons Granpius, Agricola sent his fleet round Scotland, and the information gathered from the sailors, who now knew the coast-line, and from the soldiers, who knew the interior of the country, was embodied in the first map of Britain we possess by the geographer Ptolemy. The outline is, generally speaking, correct, but he turns the north of Scotland towards the east, and so it is necessary to read north for east, east for north, south for west, and west for south. Among the "towns" (*oppida* or *πόλεις*) which Ptolemy marks as belonging to the tribes, there is one called Orrea, which he distinguishes as the possession of the Vernicomes. Of this town Dr Skene says: "It must have been situated near the junction of the Earn with the Tay, perhaps at Abernethy. The nearest Roman station to it is at Ardargie."² After examining the copy of the map in the British Museum, I cannot doubt that the place where Abernethy is now situated was Ptolemy's Orrea. He places it about the middle of the East Coast at the junction of two rivers, and the Earn joins the Tay in this parish.

It has been supposed to be at the junction of the Tay with the Almond, a much smaller stream than the river Earn, above Perth. The evidence seems to be in favour of Abernethy.

1. The position is the best possible for such a town. It implied the possession of the entrance to an exceedingly large territory, and a fortification there gave the key to the whole of it. A fort there

¹ Furth in Field, pp. 123, 124.

² Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 74.

guarded the entrance to the Tay and the Earn, and it shows foresight to have chosen it.

2. Navigation is impossible for ships beyond Kinnoul, and so while Agricola's fleet could touch here, they could not do so so far up the river as the junction of the Almond and Tay.

3. Roman coins were found between the properties of Balgonie and Netherfield, very near the junction of the Tay with the Earn, thus giving testimony of it at one time being known to the Romans.

4. At the junction of the Tay and Earn there is the beautiful estate of Carpow, and within the grounds near the mansion-house are still to be seen the remains of a Roman villa and bath. This seems to be sufficient evidence of the district not only being known to the Romans, but also of it having been the residence of a Roman general, most likely stationed here by Agricola with a legion to maintain the Roman *régime*, and to see that the treaty he had made with the Horesti was not violated. The square bath of the villa is still to be seen, and is made of the same kind of red tile as is found in the Roman works at York. The situation of it is considerably above the level of the river and adjacent straths. Not unlikely it would be then, as it is to-day, well sheltered by trees, and would form a beautiful knoll, sloping towards the Tay, open towards the sunlight, and with a stream of clear fresh water running near it. The villa would probably be one storey in height, and would form a pleasant if not a luxurious residence. Its occupier could fish for salmon in the Tay, hunt the wild boar in the woods, and when the weather was too hot for either, luxuriate upon the soft turf that would surround his home. Its presence not only speaks of Roman culture and the civilisation which Agricola tried to introduce upon our shores, but arouses a regret that the jealous emperor should have so soon recalled him to Rome, and thus prevented him from becoming an epoch-making man in our history. As it is, it gives indication of a Roman

settlement, and along with the natural situation of the place at the confluence of the Earn with the Tay, renders it most probable that the present Abernethy was Ptolemy's Orrea, and the town of the Vernicomēs, who possessed as their territory the eastern part of Fife, or "ancient Fife, exclusive of Forthreave," with the counties of Forfar and Kincardine.¹

This, too, seems to give us the historical link which explains the importance of Abernethy in ancient Pictavia, and justifies the statement of Bower: "Nunc fuit locus ille sedes principalis regalis et pontificalis, per aliquot tempora, totius regni Pictorum."² Of this more hereafter, and it is quoted just now to illustrate what seems to be a historical nexus, and we cannot but think that Ptolemy has preserved for us information of its early importance, which goes far to explain its subsequent ecclesiastical supremacy.

Another interesting fact may be here mentioned in connection with this Roman settlement at Carpow. "One of the chief occupations," says Mr Wright, "of country life among the higher classes was the chase, to which the Romans were much attached. . . . The chase of the boar appears to have been a favourite pursuit in Britain."³ It is beyond doubt that this animal must have been plentiful in the district, for the neighbouring property, immediately contiguous to the Roman villa, is called Mugdrum. It now forms part of the united estates of Carpow and Mugdrum, and its name is a corruption of two Celtic words, *muc* and *druim*, meaning sow's ridge. Considering the situation of the villa and the place-name of the adjacent territory, we can see that the Romans knew both how to select a beautiful site, and to combine with their home comfort healthy outdoor sport.

It is an interesting question to ask, What does Ptolemy imply by giving to these tribe-strongholds the name of town (*oppidum* or *πόλις*)? Are we to understand them to be such as Cæsar de-

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 74.

² Scotichronicon, bk. iv. ch. 12.

³ The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon, p. 210.

scribes : "Oppidum autem Britanni vocant, quum sylvas impeditas vallo atque fossa minuerunt, quo, incursiones hortium vitandæ causa convenire consuerunt"?¹ We have to observe that they are peculiar to the southern and eastern districts, are not found among the hill-country tribes, and seem to speak of greater organisation than is found in the interior. We have also to observe that the Roman camp of Ardargie is several miles distant from Orrea, and is situated in the inland country ; and if this, as it seems to be, was a place of defence erected by the Romans with a hostile purpose towards Orrea, it not only gives us an idea of the size of the native *oppidum*, but seems to indicate that it was more than the ordinary forts or duns. We are not, it seems, beyond the mark in inferring that there was a large fortified town, extending inwards from the confluence of the Tay and the Earn, and containing within itself the royal residence with the ordinary wattle-houses of the natives ; that it was erected for the purposes of protection and defence ; that it formed the frontier of the tribes called the Vernicomes, who possessed large territories ; that being the frontier, it formed the chief point of attack on the tribes, and that here we have the *raison d'être* of the Roman camp of Ardargie. The estate called Cary is on the southern bank of the Earn, and it is important to notice that it is connected with the word *kaer*, corresponding to *cathair*,² which enters largely into place-names. Primarily it was applied to a fortified dwelling, and secondarily to a farm or mansion-house.³ I cannot but think its primary use justifies the first meaning, while its latter may justify the second. I give it as a very probable conjecture, and if it be justified, it is an interesting instance of an old place-name pointing to an old historical fact, and preserving the record of an ancient usage.

¹ De Bell Gall., v. xxi.

² "*Cathair*, pronounced *cair*, is applied to the numerous hill-forts in which they [the early inhabitants] withstood Roman, Gael, Pict, and Saxon in turn."—Professor Veitch's 'History and Poetry of the Scottish Border,' p. 46.

³ Introduction to the 'Book of Deer,' by Dr John Stuart (Spalding Club).

Dr Cochran Patrick, founding his view on a passage in the *Amra Choluim-Chilli*, states that the land north of the Clyde was occupied by three tribes, the Cuil Gabran, Cuil Angus, and the Cuil Lorn : that the Cuil Gabran occupied Kintyre, Arran, and Bute, and possessed 560 homesteads with twenty houses each ; that the Cuil Angus possessed Isla and Jura and had 430 homesteads ; and the Cuil Lorn peopled the district of that name and had 420 homesteads.¹ Such gives us an approximate idea of what the larger territory of ancient Fife, Kincardine, and Forfar must have contained, with its large population ; of the importance of Orrea : and the meaning just attached to Ptolemy's *oppidum* and *πόλις* not only justifies the conclusions of archæologists like Dr Joseph Anderson, but affords a glimpse of the early civil importance which before long led to the ecclesiastical importance of Abernethy in the early Celtic Church. The civil capital became the ecclesiastical capital, and here unquestionably, as will be seen from the subsequent history, we have a vindication of the view advocated by the Rev. Dr Edwin Hatch : " So closely did the ecclesiastical organisation follow the civil organisation, and so firm was its hold upon society, that in the France of the present day, with hardly an exception, there is a bishop where there was a Roman municipality, and an archbishop wherever there was a provincial metropolis. As the municipal organisation became weak, the ecclesiastical organisation became strong : Christianity was so enormous a factor in contemporary society, that the bishops gradually took the place of the Roman magistrate and exercised some of the civil jurisdiction which had belonged to him." ²

So penetrative is the mediation of historical law, that, apart from the reasons already adduced, it seems a weighty reason to rest this view of Abernethy being Orrea on its ecclesiastical importance in the period immediately subsequent to the Roman.

¹ *Mediæval Scotland*, p. 7.

² *Organisation of the Early Christian Church*. Bampton Lectures for 1880. P. 205.

Again, from the information given us by Ptolemy, we can see that the roots were already planted which would lead to a larger development in the national life. The tribes have transcended the stage of separateness, and have attained to the idea of federation, with common interests and duties, with a common centre also. This federation became wider, and the common interest against a common foe led to a further combination of all the tribes north of the Forth, until in A.D. 201 we hear of a united attack being made by the Mæatæ and the Caledonii.¹ "Into these two," says Dio, "were the names of the others merged," and while there was no line of separation between them, the geographical situation of the Mæatæ was north of the wall between the Forth and Clyde, while the Caledonii lay beyond them. The presence of the Romans thus led to organisation among the tribes, and was the beginning of better things in social development.

At this time the Emperor Severus with his two sons led the Roman army, and "passed the fortresses and rivers which guarded the frontier and entered Caledonia." He perceived that the chief hindrance to Roman progress in Caledonia, and the great bulwark of the Caledonians everywhere, were wood and marsh, impassable unless to those who were long accustomed to them, and so he commenced the great work of intersecting the country with roads and spanning the rivers with bridges. In all probability the old road near Macduff's Cross, leading towards the present highway, as well as the former road through this parish across the Farg to Perth, are due to this policy of Severus. To him also may possibly be given the credit of forming others in the district, and not unlikely of building an old bridge at the present Dunbarny, that preceded the picturesque ruined one still to be seen, and which tradition assigns to the Roman period.

The period between 208 A.D. and 360 A.D. is characterised by incessant warfare, in which the Caledonians constantly make attacks

¹ Dio, 75-77; Eutropius, viii. 18.

on the Roman province in the south, and appear determined not to accept Roman domination or protection.

The invasion of the Roman province in 360 A.D. is interesting in connection with the history of this parish, for there is brought before us another people that afterwards exercised a strong influence, and very considerably shaped the ecclesiastical history of ancient Pictavia. They emerge from Ireland, and are known to the Romans under the name of Scoti: in 360 A.D. they are mentioned for the first time, when Ammianus¹ narrates that Picts and Scots made a joint attack on the Romanised Britons south of the wall, that they carried havoc as far south as the Tyne, and nearly ended the Roman *régime* in Britain. This is the beginning of an intercourse between Picts and Scots that is to be noted as epoch-making both in the civil and ecclesiastical history of Abernethy. We will hear much more of it in later chapters, but in the meantime we merely note it as a historical nexus given by Ammianus.

In 364 A.D. the province was subject to another severe attack by the united Picts, Saxons, Scots, and Attacotti.² In 384 and 407 A.D. the Picts and Scots are again united in their hostility, and carried on the warfare until through needs felt at Rome, and possibly through the apparent hopelessness of retaining the province, the Roman troops were withdrawn, and in 409 the Picts and Scots remain masters of the country north of the Forth. We admire their courageous independence, and in the federation thus formed we can see the beginning of a historical movement which ended by a Scottish king ascending the Pictish throne, and the absorption of the Picts into the race of the dominating Scots.

The Roman occupation of Britain was of a commercial and military kind, as we see from the great network of roads that extended from England in the south to Perth in the north. It

¹ Am. Mar., bk. xx. c. i.

² Ibid., bk. xxvi. 4.

affected Scotland little either in its social or agricultural character. Roman Britain was more of a military colony than it ever was a Romanised country, and Mr Green points out "that the care with which every villa is furnished with its elaborate system of hot-air flues, shows that the climate of Britain was as intolerable to Roman provincials as that of India, in spite of punkas and verandas, is to the English civilian or the English planter."¹ Another authority, speaking of the Celtic village community both before and after the Roman occupation, says: "Roman influence never entered inside the village community; it was strong enough as an outside power, but it never became, and never could become, a part of the village system."²

The *immobilis inertia* of the Scottish character seems to have been a characteristic of the early tribesmen, and, even at this early time, individuality was the outstanding feature in the national life. The Roman influence cannot be traced in the place-names of this district; they are mostly Celtic. If the Romans ever did give their names to the neighbourhood, on their withdrawal such disappeared, and afford another example of the "toughness of tradition" and the reversibility towards the original type which primitive man so frequently shows. It is exceedingly difficult to dispossess localities of the names they have acquired, and the example of London, which Sir Herbert Maxwell emphasises, explains the process that in all probability characterised this district:—

In A.D. 43 the Roman general Aulus Plautius, in the course of operations against the British King Cunobeline, intrenched himself on the marshy ground above the junction of the Lea with the Thames. There is no record of a town there previous to this, and the Celtic natives probably called it *lon dyn* or *dún*—London—the marsh fort, to distinguish it, perhaps, from *hen dún*—Hendon—the old fort, the stronghold of Cunobeline, a few miles to the north-west. The place where the Tower of London now stands was then marsh-land; and this is a good example of an ancient name preserving

¹ Making of England, p. 7.

² Village Community, p. 36.

the picture of a landscape which has undergone complete change in the process of civilisation. The Roman conquerors altered *lon dūn* into Londinium; but in order to commemorate their conquest of Britain, they subsequently decreed that the town which grew up round the camp of Aulus Plautius should be known as *Augusta*, and that, or *Londinium Augusta*, was for a time its official title; yet the simple native name could not be got rid of, and by that name it will continue to be known as long as one of its stones remains upon another.¹

¹ Scottish Land-Names, p. 3.

CHAPTER III.

ETHNOLOGICAL : SCOTS—PICTS—BRITONS—SAXONS.

ON the retiral of the Romans from Scottish soil there were four races engaged in the struggle for domination—the Scots, the Picts, the Britons, and the Saxons.¹ It is Dr Skene's view that the two former were indigenous and the two latter foreign settlers, who had come more under the influence of Roman civilisation than their warlike neighbours in the north and west ; that they had assimilated more Roman culture than the Picts and Scots, and were possessed by the Roman ideas of monarchy, municipal government, centralisation of authority, and the *civitas*, with its governing body called *curia* or *decuriones*.² St Patrick tells us in his *Confessio* that his family lived near the present Kilpatrick, in the province of the Britons, and that his father was a *decurio*.

The History of Abernethy is closely wrapt up with the history of the Picts and Scots : the former had an influence over its civil, and the latter shaped its ecclesiastical, history. It is the meeting-place of the two races, and reflects the interactionary influence they had over each other. In a subsequent chapter we shall see that it was through the Scots the church of Abernethy was dedicated to St Bride of Kildare ; and Bower, the Abbot of Inchcolm, tells us "that in the church of Abernethy there had been three elections of

¹ Nennius, *Hist. Brit.*, 2 ; Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, bk. iii. c. vi.

² *Celtic Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 119-121.

bishops when there was but one sole bishop in Scotland, and at that time it was the principal royal ecclesiastical seat (*per aliquot tempora*) of the whole kingdom of the Picts."¹ There is in these words a genuine tradition, and Bower gives as its source a chronicle belonging to the church of Abernethy ("sicut in quadam chronica ecclesiæ de Abernethy reperimus"). Abernethy is closely related to the two races in its history, and to understand its development, as well as for the sake of historical continuity in the narrative, it will be necessary to know something about the Picts and Scots, and focus what scholars have been able to say upon the ethnological relationship.

The first race that inhabited Scotland were of Iberian or Basque descent—a small, dark-haired, dark-eyed race, whose destiny it was to be partially exterminated and partially driven northwards by the more vigorous and dominant Celts. They are called Firbolgs or "bagmen." "There were with them men called *fir domhnan*, because of the *domhin*, or pits, which they dug, as well as others called *fir gaillian*, or spearmen, from the *gai*, or spears, with which they guarded the others while they worked. . . . We seem to have here the dim record of a disappearing race, and these bagmen and pitmen, as Mr Skene pointed out, were probably Iverian or Silurian miners from Cornwall, driven thence by the stronger Celtic population to take refuge in Ireland, where they attempted to carry on their native industry—the only one known to them."² This people did not pass away, however, without leaving traces behind them in place-names, and we have an indication of their presence in the present name that is given to the river-valley. "*Straith Hirend*, now Strathearn, can hardly be other than the vale of the Erann or Iverians, commemorating, probably, a settlement of the same people from whom Lough Erne, in Ireland, is said to have taken its name. . . . All the names by which Ireland was known in ancient poetry

¹ Scotichron., bk. iv. ch. 12.

² Scottish Land-Names, by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart., p. 32.

—namely, Eire, Banba, Fodla, and Elga—seem to be reflected in the Scottish place-names Earn, Banff, Athole (Ath Fotla), Elgin, and Glenelg, and Professor Rhys inclines to regard these names as being in the Iverian language.”¹ Strathearn is the name known now in the district which preserves the record of this early race, although it is just possible that Eire may be embedded in a corrupted form in Orrea, the old name of Abernethy. The Iberians were followed by the Celtic race, characterised by fair skins, large limbs, red hair, round skulls. They are unquestionably the people called by Tacitus the Caledonians, and inhabited the interior of the country, but after the province was formed, they were called Picts. It is necessary to state briefly what can be known of them:—

1. There seems no reasonable doubt that they were the tribes living north of the great wall between the Forth and Clyde, and known to the Romans as the Barbarians.

2. The name “Pict” is first applied to them by Eumennius in 296 A.D. He calls them “Caledonians and Picts.”

3. Tacitus refers, no doubt, to some distinguishing, differentiating features about them, relative to the other tribes in the south, when he calls them “new nations” (“aperuit novas gentes”).

4. In Hadrian’s reign (A.D. 120) we find that they consisted of fourteen tribes, scattered over the land from the south to the north of Scotland, and that they possessed “towns.”

5. This seems to be the starting-point of a greater unity among them, and in 201 A.D. they are called the Caledonii and Mæatae: all the other names of the tribes in former days were forgotten, and the historian Dio distinctly adds that the tribes were now merged in these two nations.

6. Dion Cassius thus describes them, and while there is something about his description that must be regarded as legendary, there is also a substratum of historical truth:—

¹ Scottish Land-Names, by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart., p. 36.

The two greatest tribes among the Britons are the Caledonii and the Mæataë, for even the names of all the other tribes have in a manner merged in these two. The Mæataë dwell close to the wall which divides the island into two parts, and the Caledonii live beyond them. . . . They never taste fish, although their lakes and rivers furnish an inexhaustible supply. They live in tents, naked and barefooted, having their wives in common. . . . The government of these tribes is democratical, and they delight above all things in pillage. They fight from chariots, which are drawn by small swift horses; they fight also on foot, run with great speed, and are most resolute when compelled to stand. Their arms consist of a shield and short spear, which has a brazen knob at the extremity of the shaft, that when shaken it may terrify the enemy by its noise. They use daggers also. They are capable of enduring hunger, thirst, and hardships of every description.

7. The presence of a common danger seems to have led to a large confederacy of tribes north of the wall, and the Mæataë, who were next to it, being compelled in the reign of Severus to give a part of their territory to the Romans, were known by the name of Vecturiones; the Caledonians, north of them, are called Dicaledonæ, while the united people are called Picti.¹

8. Bede recognises a twofold division of them into the Northern and Southern Picts, and tells us that the two nations were divided from each other by the Grampian range ("arduus atque horrentibus montium jugis").² Notwithstanding this division, they seem to have formed one nation, and their territory included seven provinces—Angus and Mearns; Athole and Gowrie; Strathearn and Menteith; Fife and Forthreve; Mar and Buchan; Moray and Ross; Caithness, including Sutherland.³ They had possessions in the Lothians, as can be seen from the name Pentland Hills; their capital was Abernethy, where their supreme king must have had his palace, although they must also have had in later times a capital in the north, for we learn from Adamnan's Life that St Columba's conversion of King Brude took place at Inverness. After the departure of the Romans they seem to have captured part of the territory

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 129.

² Bede, Eccles. Hist., bk. iii. c. 4.

³ The Church from its Foundation to the Reign of Malcolm Canmore, by Rev. James Campbell, D.D., F.S.A., p. 23.

belonging to the Strathclyde Britons, and even up to the twelfth century we hear of the Southern Picts in Galloway. It is a very wide territory they possessed and ruled, and in those early days Abernethy, being their principal civil and ecclesiastical seat, must have been regarded by them with great veneration and respect.

The genesis of the word Pict is somewhat interesting. It may have arisen from the fact that the people so-called painted their skins, and the Picts evidently had retained that barbarous custom, when the Britons and Saxons, who were more civilised through contact with Roman influence, had almost altogether given it up. The name "Picti" was probably given to the people who still retained what the more refined had learned to discard as out of harmony with good taste, and it is just possible that it may have come to bear with it a degree of obloquy even in these early names.

Excessive adornment strikes a Western as both foolish and offensive to good taste, and it gives us an idea of the impression that would be borne upon the civilised Romans as they observed a people who punctured their bodies with iron, and painted on their skin the figures of animals. Such would seem to them to be nothing short of barbarism, and would probably be the chief reason why they gave the name "Picti" to the ancient Caledonians.

On the other hand, it is not unlikely that there may have been a native word in use among the Picts themselves, and by which they were known to each other, resembling the Latin word in sound; that this word was rendered in Latin by a word that seemed to come near it, and at the same time expressed the predominant characteristic of the people. Among the ancient Gauls we find two words, *Pictones* and *Pictavi*, that seem to come near it, and yet cannot be connected with *pictus*, so that in all likelihood "Pict" preserves the corrupted Latinised form of a native word. Says Professor Rhys:—

All these Picts were natives of Britain; . . . but in the year 360 another painted people appeared on the scene. They came from Ireland;

and to distinguish these two sets of painted foes from one another, Latin historians left the painted natives to be called *Picti*, as had been done before, and for the painted invaders from Ireland they retained, untranslated, a Celtic word of the same (or nearly the same) meaning—namely, *Scotti*. Neither the *Picts* nor the *Scotti* probably owned these names, the former of which is to be traced to Roman authors, while the latter was probably given the invaders from Ireland by the *Brythons*, whose country they crossed the sea to ravage. The *Scots*, however, did recognise a national name, which described them as painted or tattooed men. Rather, we should say, it did more; it connoted the embellishment of the person which the tattooing was supposed to effect. This word was *Cruithnig*. . . . The Irish *Picts* being more persistently called *Cruithnig*, Latinised *Cruthenii*, while the compound *Cruithen-tuath*, or the nation of the *Picts*, was mostly appropriated to the *Picts* of Britain north of the Forth, who were also termed *Piccardach*, suggested by the Latin *Picti*, *Pictavi*, *Pictones*, *Pictores*, all of which terms have been used in reference to them.¹

All their traditions again represent them as settlers on the soil, and as soldiers who married wives, whom they had obtained from the Irish; they maintained a peculiar law of succession on the mother's side, and not on the father's; succession to the crown went to brother's or sister's sons, to the rejection of sons.

In the Welsh legends, says Dr Skene, the *Picts* are said, from this marriage with wives of the race of the *Gwyddyl*, to have been called *Gwyddyl Ffichti*; but in the form of it in Layamon's '*Brut*' it is undoubtedly used to explain the language of the *Picts*:—

“Through the same women
Who there long dwelt,
The folk gan to speak
Ireland's speech.”

And the same idea is expressed in the chronicle quoted in the '*Scala Chronica*,' which states that they obtained their wives from Ireland, “on condition that their issue should speak Irish.”²

That the law of succession to the crown, as always through females, was binding among them, is verified by the results of Dr Skene's investigations, which are as follows:—

1. That brothers always succeeded each other.

¹ Celtic Britain, pp. 235, 236.

² Dr Skene's *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, p. c.

2. That in no case does a son succeed a father ; after the brothers have reigned, a new family comes in.

3. That the names of the fathers and of the sons are quite different. In no case does the name borne by any of the sons appear among the names of the fathers, nor conversely is there an instance of a father's name appearing among the sons.

4. The names of the sons consist of a few Pictish names borne by sons of different fathers. These are six Drusts, five Talorgs, three Nectans, two Galans, six Gartnaidhs, four Brudes. In no case does the name of a father occur twice in the list of fathers.

5. In the list there are two cases of sons bearing Pictish names, whose fathers are known to have been strangers, and these are the only fathers of whom we have any account. They are (1) Talorg Macainfrit ; (2) Brude MacBile.¹

Throughout the long list of kings we see that the statement of Bede and Nennius was sternly observed, "that from the nobility of the mother should always be the right to the sovereignty." From the description given of the home-life of the Mæata it can be inferred that the marriage-bond was a lax one, and, as Sir Henry Maine points out, "paternity is matter of inference as opposed to maternity, which is matter of observation"² Westermarck brings forward sufficient evidence to show that "kinship through females only" was not a universal or even a general custom among primitive man, and does not accept the hypothesis of Mr MacLennan, however interesting and ingenious it is.³ Dr Skene thinks the only satisfactory explanation of this peculiar Pictish law is, that the kings among the Picts were elected from one family, clan, or tribe, or from one in each of the two divisions of the Northern and Southern Picts ; that intermarriage in this family or tribe was not permitted ; that husbands had to be obtained from other races or

¹ Intro. to Pictish Chronicle, and Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 233.

² Dissertations on Early Law and Custom, p. 149.

³ The History of Human Marriage, ch. v.

tribes; that the children were adopted into the tribe of the mother, and that certain definite names were conferred upon them.¹

In those days, when the marriage-bond was lax, and woman had not attained to the position of honour and respect which the Christian religion has conferred upon her—when might was right, and the humanities and chivalry which Christianity created and fostered were non-existent—we can hope that in some way this law may have been educative and pointed towards better things—that in emphasising the dignity of the queen-mother, it may have in some measure given a glimmering of the dignity of womanhood itself.

It will be necessary to recall something also of the Scotti, with whom we find the Picts joining in a united attack on the Roman province in 360, 364, 387, 402, and 407 A.D. It affords an interesting link in historical continuity, and, as we will immediately see, was reflected in the ecclesiastical history of this parish.

The Scots came from Ireland, according to Nennius, Ammianus, and Bede. We find their chief centres to have been Ulster, Kintyre, and Argyll; but the notices already referred to represent them as coming into closer federation with the Picts: this federation led at last to the absorption of the Picts in the Scottish nation, and the very disappearance of their name under the new *régime*. The early Pictish legends show the close connection that existed between the two peoples, and subsequent history is reflected in the names given to the country. Albania, Pictavia, Scotia, speak of one ethnological evolution. The Pictish Chronicle is our guide in this matter: it exists in two separate editions, one of which, according to Dr Skene, "probably emerged from Abernethy, and the other from Brechin."² Reference has already been made to its narrative, and it points to a close connection existing between the two nations. The Scots always come before us as a strong people, distinguished by an outstanding individuality: the ironical words of Cumman to Seghine, Abbot of Iona, regarding the Celtic Easter observance, express a

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 234.

² Ibid., p. 134.

truth which one conversant with them must have felt: "Roma errat; Hierosolyma errat; Antiochia errat; totus mundus errat; soli tantum Scoti et Britones rectum sapiunt."¹

Says another writer :—

The ancient Irish emerge in history a mixed race predominantly Gaelic, and as such tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed. They were gentle in peace, fierce in war, loving enterprise and the joy of great deeds—the gathering together, doubtless, in that remote island on the shores of the Western world of the most adventurous, the most high-spirited, the minds most curious to see new lands and find the limits of the world, the hearts most susceptible to the tender influences of nature and apt to be fascinated by that land which is nearest the setting-sun—the most imaginative and aspiring and poetic spirits in all those communities that moved slowly or rapidly westward to find new worlds. So, out of the foremost waves of the great human drifts that covered Europe, the Irish people was built up, to issue forth presently in the same spirit of enterprise that had brought them thither, spreading all over Europe and as far north as Iceland, first as warriors, and secondly as missionaries, carrying scholarship in their train.²

These Scots were Celtic, and were possessed by the Celtic spirit. They were driven by the "irresistible impulse" that Grimm attributes to the early Aryans; they were enthusiastic and communicative, incapable of settling within a fixed area. When their genius was consecrated by the Christian spirit, they became missionaries and pioneers in the civilisation of the world; when in early times it existed apart from a religious ideal, they appear as restless marauders who travelled hither and thither for plunder and settlement. Sir Herbert Maxwell says of them :—

We may utterly discard the flattering legend which made them descendants of Scotta, a daughter of Pharaoh. In Cormac's Glossary the word is given as "Scuit," and "Scuite" is translated "a wanderer" in O'Reilly's dictionary. Ammianus Marcellinus notices them a century before they finally settled in Argyle as "Scotti per diversa vagantes"—the Scots wandering hither and thither, and attacking the Roman province in alliance with the Picts. Gildas, after describing this first incursion of Scots and their

¹ *Adamni Vita Columbæ*, edited by J. T. Fowler, M.A., D.C.L., p. lxxix.

² *Celtic Ireland*, by Sophie Bryant, D.Sc., p. 14.

occupation of part of Alban (which we now call Scotland) for eight years, speaks of them as “*impudentes grassatores Hiberniæ*”—“shameless vagabonds from Ireland.” They were a restless race of marauders, and may well have earned the name of *scuite*, vagabonds; and this, rather than the romantic connection with Pharaoh’s daughter, seems to be the origin of the name of Scot, of which we have now so much reason to be proud.¹

As to the language of the Picts, there are three theories:—

1. There is that of Dr Whitley Stokes, who maintains “that Pictish was a Celtic language retaining several traces of the old Celtic declensions, but in other respects nearer to Welsh than to Irish. With the exception of a few glossed words and about 370 names of persons and places (some of which are hopelessly corrupt), the Pictish language is unknown. To interpret a Pictish document of, say, the eighth century, we must look for cognate words and similar phonetic phenomena, first to Old Welsh, then to Old Irish, and only when these tongues fail us, to other Indo-European languages.”² After examining all the words in the old records, presumably Pictish, he continues: “The foregoing list of names and words contains much that is still obscure; but, on the whole, it shows that Pictish, so far as regards its vocabulary, is an Indo-European, and especially Celtic, speech. Its phonetics, so far as we can ascertain them, resemble those of Welsh rather than of Irish.”³

2. There is the theory advocated by Professor Rhys of Oxford, that the Picts were mostly of Iberian blood; that when they emerged first in history, they retained their Iberian speech, and were gradually Celticised by the influence of the Dalriadic Scots from Ireland—the Gaelic of Scotland and Ireland being pronounced the same language, with slight dialectic differences, in the two countries.

It remains [he says] that the language of the people who could not understand Columba was not Celtic, but in all probability that of the ancient inhabitants. . . . For a long time, probably before Pictish or

¹ Scottish Land-Names, pp. 20, 21.

² Letter on the Newton Stone in ‘Academy’ for June 4, 1892, p. 543.

³ Proceedings of Royal Society of Edinburgh, vol. xx. p. xix.

Iverian wholly died out, it was loaded with words borrowed from Goidelic; but there is no ground whatever to suppose that it otherwise resembled it or any other Aryan tongue. . . . At first the Goidel probably drove the Ivernian back towards the west and the north, but when another invasion came, that of the Brythons, he was driven back in the same way; that is, he was forced, so to say, into the arms of the Iverian native, and to make common cause with him against the common enemy. Then followed the amalgamation of the Goidelic and Iverian elements; for wherever traces of the latter are found we seem to come upon the native in the process of making himself a Goidelic Celt, and before becoming Welsh or English in speech he first became Goidelic in every instance south of the Clyde. This means, from the Celtic point of view, that the Goidelic race of history is not wholly Celtic or Aryan, but inherits in part a claim to the soil of these islands, derived from possession at a time when, as yet, no Aryan waggoner had driven into Europe.¹

3. There is the view advocated by Dr Skene—that the language spoken by the Picts and Scots was Gaelic, but that there were dialectic differences, produced by influences in different localities. Referring to the presence of an interpreter in St Columba's intercourse with the Northern Picts, as stated by Adamnan, Dr Skene avers that this is stated much too broadly by advocates of the opposite view. Only on two occasions does Adamnan mention that an interpreter was required, and on both occasions in connection with his gospel-message.

A mere change in the vowel sounds with a difference in the position of the accent, although the vocabulary might be absolutely the same, would be sufficient to render mutual intercourse difficult, and, although one might make a shift to follow a conversation, or a few sentences of simple import might be understood, no very great dialectic difference would be required to make a formal address unintelligible. St Columba was an educated man, possessing all the learning of the age, and had to instruct a rude and unlettered people whose vernacular idiom would vary in different parts of the country from the cultivated language of a Christian ecclesiastic. He seems to have had no difficulty with the king and those about him. . . . Giving the fullest weight to this consideration, it amounts to no more than this, that the difference between the Pictish and Irish may not have been greater than that between Breton or Cornish and Welsh.²

¹ Celtic Britain, pp. 269-271.

² Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 198-200.

The idea under the legend of the Picts obtaining their wives from the Irish seems to be an ethnological one, and was given to explain the identity of languages between the Picts and the Scots. In Dr Skene's view they are the Celtic race that followed the Iberians both in Britain and in Ireland:—

These are the people of the round-headed skulls, and consisted of two great branches, whose language—the British and Gadhelic—though possessing evident marks that they had a common origin, and that both branches belonged originally to one race, is yet distinguished by marked dialectic differences. Each of these great branches, again, was divided into varieties of the Gadhelic branch—one was a fair-skinned, large-limbed, and red-haired race, and were represented in Britain by the people of the interior whom the Romans thought to be indigenous, and who, after the Roman province was formed, were called by them Picts, or painted people. They are represented in the legendary history of Ireland by the Tuatha Dé Danann and by the Cruithnigh, a name which was the Irish equivalent of the Latin “Picti,” and was applied to the Picts of Scotland, and to the people who preceded the Scots in Ulster, and were eventually confined to a district in the eastern part of it. The other variety was a fair-skinned, brown-haired race, represented in the legendary history as the race of the Milidh or Milesius, and, after the fourth century, known by the name of Scots.¹

Abernethy was a prominent historical centre, which formed the meeting-place of the two races; the old place-names of the district are all Celtic, and seem to support the view of Dr Skene.

For occurs in Forgandenny and in old form of *Fothur* in For-teviot; *Fin* in Fingask; *Auchter* occurs in Auchtermuchty, while *Pit* and *Bal* are very frequent as prefixes, *e.g.*—

Pitblae.	Pitlour.	Pittencraig.	Balgonie.
Pitcaithly.	Pitmeddan.	Pitversie.	Ballendrick.
Pitcarrick.	Pittenbroich.	Ballachie.	Ballomil.
Pitcurran.			

All these places are situated within a short distance of each other, and seem to have been small holdings. *Pit*, *Ball*, *For*, *Fin*, *Auchter*, are peculiarly Pictish, and are only to be found north of

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 226, 227.

the Clyde and Forth. Says Dr John Stewart: "The lands described by the prefix *Pit* seem to have been divisions or portions known from their connection with an individual or special use."¹ "It is," says Dr Skene, "used synonymously with *both*, a dwelling, and *baile*, a town."² "Our idea of a primitive settler," says Dr Reeves, "would be of one who obtained a tract of land so circumstanced as to be clear in part and have a fair supply of running water, near which a habitation might be erected, together with a proportion of mountain, wood, or bog, as the case might be. Should circumstances lead the neighbouring occupants to a community of abode, their several farms, while they retained their distinctive appellations, would naturally acquire a generic name borrowed from their joint habitation."³

Aber and Inver are used in this parish with a distinctive difference of meaning. Inver refers to the mouth of the river and Aber to the ford, considerably distant from the mouth. Thus we have Invernethy and Abernethy,—Invernethy being situated near the confluence of the Nethy and the Earn, while Abernethy is situated on the banks of the Nethy, about a mile from this confluence. The Nethy in ancient times seems to have been a much greater stream than it is to-day. About two miles westward of the village is Aberargie, situated at the ancient ford over the water of Farg. Culfargie is below it, and means the back of the Farg, being evidently descriptive of the turn the Farg takes at that property on its way to the Earn. The following place-names are also Celtic :—

Bein	Drumcairn	Kilnockie	Mugdrum.
Carey	Dunbarny	Kinmonth	Ochil.
Carpow	Dunbulc	Moncrieff (<i>Mon-</i>	Raemore.
Catochil	Glentarkie	<i>aigh Craebi</i>)	Tarduff.
Colzie	Gowlie	Muckley	Turflundie.
Cordon			

¹ Introduction to Book of Deer, p. lxxxiv.

² Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 224.

³ Proceedings of Royal Irish Academy, vol. vii. p. 473.

The Castle Law is evidently a transliteration, castle being equivalent to the Celtic *caislen* or *cathair*.

Clunie is a corruption of the Celtic *cluain*—a lawn or meadow ; and immediately adjacent to it is Greenside—old name Pitgrunzie. Pitgrunzie is a corruption of Pit-grianan, and *grianan*, according to Dr Joyce, means (1) a beautiful sunny spot ; (2) a bower or summer-house ; (3) a balcony or gallery (on a house) ; (4) a royal residence. Its literal meaning is a sunny spot, for it is derived from *grian*, the sun : Cormac's Glossary makes it "a palace on the hill" ; while O'Brien explains it as a royal seat, and Dr Joyce adds, "This is unquestionably its general meaning when it occurs in topographical names."¹

Pitgrunzie seems to indicate the place where the palace of the early kings was situated.

The ancient Celts believed the tops of hills to be peopled by fairies, and in the name given to the range of hills on the opposite side of the Tay (Sidlaws—the law of the sidhe or fairies) we have evidence as to their belief in supernatural agencies that were regarded as possessing the power of either being able to send prosperity or adversity.

¹ Irish Names of Places, p. 281.

CHAPTER IV.

ABERNETHY THE CENTRE OF THE CELTIC COMMUNITY.

HAVING now traced the development of the people through the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Age, and stated the reasons which seem cogent for identifying Abernethy as the site of Ptolemy's Orrea; having also seen that it was the centre of two races, which have been regarded as one in language and blood, and the Celtic nature of which seems established by the study of the place-names of the district,—we proceed to state the outstanding features of the ancient Celtic community as it would exist in the old Pictish capital before the introduction of Christianity. The period which we are about to consider is the transition point between the Pagan and the Christian Periods, but the features that were peculiar to it lingered for centuries, and in many parts of the country are not eliminated yet.

Hegel has described the history of the world as a gradual development of human freewill, and according to him there are some States in which one man is free, others in which a few are free, and others again in which many are free. Into our idea of the Celtic State we must not read any of our modern conceptions of liberty. Mr Mill has advocated freedom and variety of situations as the best possible helps in man's endeavours towards the highest and most harmonious development of all his powers, yet we must remember that such ideas are the outcome of a long

and continued development, which in Celtic times was only begun. Into the poverty of the origin we must not bring the richness of a later result.

"The worth of a State in the long-run," it has been said, "is the worth of the individuals composing it; and a State which postpones the interests of their mental expansion and elevation to a little more of administrative skill, or of that semblance of it which practice gives, in the details of business; a State which dwarfs its men in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands—even for beneficial purposes,—will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished; and that the perfection of machinery to which it has sacrificed everything will in the end avail it nothing, for want of the vital power which, in order that the machine might work more smoothly, it has preferred to banish."¹

Such is a modern conception which the conditions of early times forbade; and any idea of the welfare of the State being involved in the welfare of the individuals that composed it was not yet conceived. The social unit both of the Gaelic and Cymric people was not the individual, nor even the family, but always the tribe. And the tribe was composed of families held together by the tie of consanguinity—by kinship through blood. Says Sir Henry Maine: "There was no brotherhood recognised by our savage forefathers except actual consanguinity regarded as a fact. If a man was not kin to another, there was nothing between them. He was an enemy to be slain or spoiled or hated, as much as the wild beasts upon which the tribe made war, as belonging indeed to the craftiest and the cruellest order of wild beasts. It would scarcely be too strong an assertion that the dogs which followed the camp had more in common with it than the tribesmen of an alien and unrelated tribe."² At the very heart of the tribal system lies the feeling of relationship to a common ancestor, of descent

¹ On Liberty, by John Stuart Mill, p. 68.

² Early History of Institutions, p. 65.

from a common head; and the Pictish Chronicle states that Cruidne, the son of Cinge, was the father of the Picts in Ireland, and that transmarine Scotland was divided by his seven sons into seven provinces :—

“ Seven sons there were to Cruidne,
Seven parts they made of Alban :
Cait, Ce, Cerig, warlike men,
Fib, Fidach, Fotla, Fortrenn.”

We thus arrive at an ethnological principle in connection with the early tribal system. The tribe is personified in an *eponymus*, who is regarded as the common ancestor; their settlement in the country is represented by his marriage with a female, whose name has always a connection with the country; his sons receive each a part of the country, and this distribution corresponds with the territorial division.¹ The ties that united the Celts were personal rather than political: a personality was at the centre of all their groups, and the common devotion to him as their head became the rallying-point of combination and in a larger sense of federation. The social bond was always an accepted sense of kinship, and devotion to the common *eponymus* held them together. The early Celt knew not of devotion to a principle, but only of devotion to a person. This relationship was symbolised not only by an abstract idea, but also by a concrete embodiment. It resulted in the common acceptance of a common totem, between which and all the members of the tribe there existed a close and intimate relationship as symbolising a blood-bond. This connection was regarded as mutually beneficial, and totems seem to have been of three kinds—(a) individual, (b) sex, and (c) tribe totems. The truth that underlies the description of the Picts as a “painted” people may be, that on their skins they punctured the totem, the acceptance of which both indicated their relationship to a common ancestor and became a political bond.

¹ Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. iii. p. 95.

Comparative anthropology, through the study of survivals and existing habits among peoples that are just emerging from savagery, has given a clear idea of what early totemism must have implied. The relationship between a tribe and its totem was one regarded as of a supernatural kind—it implied mutual help and protection; to respect the totem was also to expect that the totem would care for the tribe: totem-worship was always linked with divination, and the totem was supposed to foretell the future by giving omens.

Totemism had a social aspect, and while it bound the men of the same totem to each other, alienated them from men of a different totem. The acceptance of a totem involved kinship and mutual help. It is declared to be stronger than the family bond in modern times.

Persons of the same totem might not marry with each other, and interference with this law was regarded as a tribal wrong demanding tribal revenge. Its influence was to make the tribe exogamous. In most of the totem tribes known to-day in Australia and North America, the children adopt the totem of their mother.¹

It is not unlikely that the symbolism found on the Pictish stones of the Pagan Period is to be explained as a representation of the totems adopted by the early tribes, which would also come to acquire the influence of religious symbolism over their minds. It may be the representation of a social and a religious bond.

The tribe arose, then, from blood-relationship to an *eponymus*, and this was symbolised by the acceptance of a tribal totem punctured on the skin, thus making visible at a glance, in days when men could not read, every man's tribal connection. Every tribesman was fettered by a series of inexorably stern rules. The idea of liberty is modern, and was utterly foreign to the early Celt. Says Sir John Lubbock: "The savage is nowhere free. All over the world his daily life is regulated by a complicated and often most inconvenient set of customs (as forcible as laws) of quaint prohibi-

¹ See 'Totemism,' by J. G. Fraser, M.A., LL.D.

tions and privileges,—the prohibitions, as a general rule, applying to the women and the privileges to the men. Nay, every action of their lives is regulated by numerous rules, none the less stringent because unwritten.”¹ The tribesman had no existence apart from the tribe to which he belonged; the tribe possessed the land, and any interest he had in it was as a member of the tribe, and any benefit he derived from it was as a trustee to whom the tribe had given a portion of land for cultivation.² The owner of it was the tribe as a corporate body, at the head of which was the king, who derived his authority because he was the head of the tribe, and had a close blood-relationship with the tribal *eponymus*.

Such is the account of the early tribe, yet at the time of which we write men had got beyond their simple tribal stages, and had attained to federation, to combination. This had arisen through the working of natural causes and external influences—through the very necessities of human nature and pressure from without. Orreay was in early Roman times the capital of a federation of tribes that possessed East Fife, Forfarshire, and Kincardineshire, and towards the close of the fourth century Abernethy was the centre of the Southern Picts, and not unlikely of territory beyond them. This speaks of social development, which maintained the features of the early tribe just described, but on a wider scale; for while the tribe entered into the federation, it in some measure maintained individual features apart from it: while feeling the common ties of blood and language with other tribes, it yet seems to have retained a sense of local autonomy as a tribe. There was a unity beyond the differences, and if they each claimed a different *eponymus*, they could also recall that the seven *eponymi* had a common ancestor, even Cruide. We have Bede’s statement that the Picts were divided into two nations—the Northern and the Southern

¹ Origin of Civilisation and Primitive Condition of Man, p. 434.

² “Property in movables naturally preceded property in land; and the collective tenure of land generally preceded, perhaps, its individual tenure.”—Professor Flint’s Socialism, p. 30.

Picts—and we have also historical evidence that the Southern Picts were in confederation with the Scots, to whom they were kin by the common bonds of blood and language.

An interesting light is thrown upon the social condition of the old Pictish capital by the 'Amra Columcille.' Referring to St Columba's preaching among the Southern Picts, and to a "supreme king," whom Dr Skene identifies as Gartnaidh,¹ the tract says: "The teacher is not, who used to teach the *tuatha* or tribes of Toi;" and the gloss upon it is, "The teacher who used to teach the tribes who were around Tai. It is the name of a river in Alban." And again: "He subdued the mouths of the fierce who were at Toi with the will of the king"; which is thus glossed, "He subdued the mouths of the fierce with the Ardrig or supreme king of Toi; though it was what they wished—to say evil, so it is a blessing they used to make, *ut fuit* Balam."² Says Dr Skene: "Gartnaidh is here called the supreme king of Toi or of the Tay, and the people whom Columba taught, the tribes about the Tay, which leaves little doubt that the church of Abernethy on the banks of the Tay, at this time the chief seat of government, had been refounded in connection with his mission to the Southern Picts."

We quote this not for the sake of its ecclesiastical reference—that will be considered in a subsequent chapter—but for the sake of the light it throws upon the civil polity.

The people are called the *tuatha* or tribes, and the king the *ardrig* or supreme king; and both references, especially the latter, are instructive in so far as they give us an idea of the government among the Southern Picts.

The unit was the tribe, but several tribes uniting together formed a *mortuath*, or federal nation, over which ruled a king who was termed *ri mortuath*. But at the period of which we write the State polity had developed beyond this to a higher stage. Several of

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 136, 137.

² Amra Columcille, by O'Beirne Crowe, pp. 29, 63.

these *mortuath*, uniting again, formed a province, which was called *cuicidh*, as, for example, the five provinces of Ireland — Ulster, Leinster, Meath, Munster, and Connaught ; over each province was the *ri cuicidh*, or provincial king, while over all the provinces and their provincial kings ruled the supreme king, who was called the *ardri*.¹ When, therefore, we hear of the Pictish king, whose seat was at Abernethy, as *ardrig*, we hear of an advanced stage of polity, which included several *mortuath* or provinces, with their kings, under its *régime* ; and with the distribution of local power in the various districts, there was at this time an approach made towards (if not already somewhat realised) a centralised authority.

The succession to the several stages of kinship was regulated by the law of *tanistry*—"that is, hereditary in the family but elective in the individual, the senior of the family being usually preferred" ; the *dun* was the royal residence, and the average number of fighting men which each tribe possessed was 700.²

A distinction of ranks, again, was inevitable from the working of internal causes incidental to development.

I cannot [says Charles Kingsley], as long as my eyes are open, yield to the modern theory of the equality—indeed of the non-existence—of races. Holding, as I do, the primeval unity of the human race, I see in that race the same inclination to sport into fresh varieties, the same competition of species between those varieties, which Mr Darwin has pointed out among plants and mere animals. A distinguished man arises ; from him a distinguished family ; from it a distinguished tribe, stronger, cunninger than those around. It asserts its supremacy over its neighbours at first exactly as a plant or animal would do, by destroying them and, where possible, eating them ; next, having grown more prudent, by enslaving them ; next, having gained a little morality in addition to its prudence, by civilising them, raising them more or less towards its own standard. . . .

If one invented a new weapon, a new mode of tillage, or aught else which gave him power, that would add to the superiority of his whole family. . . . A great aristocrat must that man have become who first finding a foal upon the steppe, deserted by its dam, brought it home and reared it, and

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. iii. pp. 149, 150.

² Maine, vol. iv. p. 331.

then bethought him of the happy notion of making it draw—presumably by its tail. . . . A greater still he who first substituted the bit for the halter. A greater still he who first thought of wheels. A greater still he who conceived the yoke and pole for bearing up his chariot. . . .

A great aristocrat, again, must he have been among those latter races who first conceived the notion of getting on his horse's back, accommodating his motions to the beast's, and becoming a centaur, half-man, half-beast. That invention must have tended, in the first instance, as surely towards democracy as did the invention of firearms. A tribe of riders must have been always more or less equal and free. . . . Free, because they might be defeated, exterminated, but never enchained. They could never become *glebæ ad scripti*, bound to the soil, as long as they could take horse and saddle, and away.¹

This tendency is seen in the Celtic tribal communities, and aristocracies were founded chiefly upon the possession of cattle and office. There were the *mormaers* and *toiseachs*—often related to the royal family, and rising into prominence through the possession of large movable property, which in due course led to the private possession of land. Says Dr Skene: "When the same family had retained possession of land for three generations it came at length to constitute a right of property, and thus a class of territorial lords was created whose position as *aíres* was based upon property in land. This right of property, and all the privileges connected with it, was termed *deis*, and they formed a superior class of territorial magnates, who were termed *flaith* or chieftains, and constituted an order termed the *grad flaith*, in contradistinction to the *grad feine* or inferior order."²

The tribal idea of common property was only an ideal, never realised, and from the very first there were causes inherent in human nature which prevented it being realised. In many things the men of the past and the present agree more than they differ, and causes were from the very first in operation which produced differences in rank, because they implied differences in the start and differences in the character. Possessions in cattle created the

¹ Ancien Régime, pp. 13, 15, 16.

² Celtic Scotland, vol. iii. p. 145.

boaire or cowlord, and relationship to the supreme king and chief brought privileges from which the serf class were excluded. These led to private possession in land quite distinct from the common land of the tribe, and while appointment to office was nominally in the hands of the tribe, the nominations of the king always carried a predominating influence, and led to positions of distinction. The large number of place-names in this district beginning with *Pet* and *Bal* seem to point to this, and indicate that besides the property belonging to the group, there was also at a very early period private possessions given by the superior to his own kind, and to those who by superior ability had raised themselves above the many. The later distinction of *nativi* and *liberi* pointed back to an older distinction of *daer* and *saer*, of slave and freeman. The *daer* class were composed of those who had neither cattle nor land, and were either captives taken in war or men who had surrendered their liberty to the *ri*, the *flaths*, or the *boaires* for the sake of protection, and to whom they rendered their personal service, as they were unable to give any return in kind. The possession of property and office by the few, and the absence of them, accompanied by financial incompetency, among the many, led to class distinctions in the early tribe, while time tended to deepen and enlarge them. "The chief on an election became, by virtue of such election, the proprietor of a seigniorship over all the lands of the tribe, and his power was greater still over the waste-lands. From these latter, indeed, more than from equitable reallocation of occupied tribe-lands, it is probable that his accession of those allodial lands was made which, by the facilities they offered for the support of his retainers and servile dependents, became the mainstay of his power and the stepping-stone to increased conversion of tribal territory into private property. The very nature of the tribal system fostered this germ of despotism." To prevent himself becoming an Ishmael without a social, political, or legal existence, every man had to become the retainer of some chief,

who in return for service rendered gave protection. And in this way arose the class of *fuidhirs*, "strangers or fugitives from other tribes; and the tribal chief who extended his ægis over the outcast would in all probability allot for his use a portion of the waste-land of the tribe."¹

The *fuidhirs* were of two kinds, the *saer* and the *daer*: the former possessed in some measure the rights of freemen, and had a limited usufruct of the soil; the latter were in a state of abject slavery to the *flath*, upon whom they were dependent. Two characteristics seem to be concomitant from the very earliest of times—the increasing richness of the rich, and the increasing poverty of the poor; and to recall the large possession of lands that belonged to the king and to his *flaths*, the *normaers*, and the *toiseachs*, is to see that along with this distinction there was also among the rank and file of the tribesmen a decline into a condition of hopeless subjection. The distinction seems very soon to have been drawn between the governing class and the governed class; between the party in ascendancy and the class under domination. To-day the leaders of men must move in the line of public opinion, which is proving itself more and more to be the predominant force; in those early days the dominant classes exercised their privileges apart from the people, and not unlikely their rule was characterised by a contempt of human rights and privileges. It is the time of harsh contracts, when might was right; and while we delight in the early romances of King Arthur and his knights, our admiration must be considerably lessened by recalling that the lot of the slaves must have been one of cheerless gloom, unvisited by hope. It was so in ancient Greece; it was so among our early forefathers. Professor Mahaffy thinks that Hesiod's 'Work and Days' gives us the true picture of the lot that befell the many in ancient Greece; that while the Homeric poems picture how kings and a favoured class

¹ Land Tenure in Ireland. Yorke Prize Essay (Cambridge). By W. L. Montgomery, M.A., LL.M. Pp. 8, 9.

ought to have lived, Hesiod brings before us the true facts of the case, and "pictures a hopeless and miserable existence, in which care and the despair of better things tended to make men hard and selfish, and to blot out those fairer features which cannot be denied to the courts and palaces."¹ It is more likely that if a Hesiod had lived among these Pictish Celts, and pictured to us the life of the many under the kings, *normaers*, and *toiseachs*, the picture would present the same unlovely social features of which Dr Mahaffy speaks. Pictland was not "a paradise of yeomen," and certainly one of the best benefits the early Celtic Church conferred upon the people was the liberation of the slave class. Its influence tended to mitigate their hard lot, and the number of manumissions that were made in the neighbourhood of ancient churches shows how directly its work tended to the abolition of slavery. To do so it had first to create a better opinion among the kings and leaders, but its message as to the rights as well as the duties of men must have tended in those early days to better treatment and more kindly consideration on the part of the powerful towards the unfortunate; and to penetrate ancient society with the idea of brotherhood was the highest service it could confer upon the race. It has been said, "It is doubtful whether manumissions were frequent before the introduction of Christianity, for the greatest number took place in the neighbourhood of the monasteries and convents, where the pressure of the Church could be brought to bear directly upon the people."²

In early Celtic times the slaughter or injury of a tribesman was regarded as a wrong done to the tribe, and the tribe as a body revenged it. When the tie of kinship was felt so keenly as it was in early times, retaliation and revenge for injury done to kith and kin were regarded as binding.³ Among the Arabs the "ransom of blood" falls upon all within the sixth degree of relationship, and

¹ Social Life in Greece, p. 73.

² The Old English Manor, by C. M'Lean Andrew, Ph.D., p. 191.

³ Historical Essays, by E. W. Robertson, p. xxiv.

a similar custom seems to have prevailed among all early people. Among the Celts this stage passed into another, in which the right of retaliation might be bought off by the honour-price,—a system of fines estimated according to the position in the tribe of the person who had been slain or injured. Among the laws of David I. there is preserved a fragmentary code termed "*Leges inter Brettos and Scottos*," which contains a list of fines or compensation for slaughter, called *cro* and *kelchyn*. It was paid in cattle or gold, and varied according to the social station of the sufferer or injured. The *cro* of the king is one thousand *ky*, or three thousand *ore* or ounces of gold; that of the king's son is seven score *ky* and ten *ky*; that of the carl is sixteen *ky*; and that of the "*blud*" of a carl is one cow,¹ &c. The document is interesting to us here as embodying the narrative of a ratio that characterised the ancient Celtic community, and had its root in very remote times.

The burdens on the land held by the ancient communities in Scotland were *cain*, *conveth*, *feacht*, and *sluaged*; the two former were paid in kind, while the two latter were personal services, which the possessor or holder of the land was required to render. Reference is made in an old rental of the earldom of Fife "to a certain *firma* or rent which is termed *canus*, with ten shillings of the *can* of Abernethy";² Dr Skene adds, "We find these burdens in both of the leading divisions of the country north of the firths."

Can or *cain* was a portion of the produce of the land paid in grain when it was arable land, in cattle or pigs when it was pasture-land. *Cain* primarily had the meaning of law, was synonymous with the Latin *canon*, and was latterly applied to any payment that was fixed by law.

Conveth is equivalent to the Latin *refectio*, was founded on the rights which the chief claimed when passing through his territory, to be supported by his followers, and came latterly to mean a fixed food contribution upon every ploughgate of land.

¹ See 'Celtic Scotland,' vol. iii. pp. 217, 218.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 227-229.

Feacht and *sluaged* correspond to the Latin *expeditio* and *exercitus* respectively, and mean expedition and hosting. *Feacht* implied the duty of joining in expeditions within the territory at the command of the king or chief, and *sluaged* was the service of hosting or joining the king's army to repel a foreign invasion, or carry war into an alien country. These burdens were in Scotland laid upon the davocho of land.¹

The labour given to the land must in those early days have been crude and wasteful, and the people evidently sought from the land only the satisfaction of immediate needs and the payment of their burdens. The Celtic monastery not only taught them the Christian religion, but also taught them to make the best of the resources at their hand; and while Roman influence must have led to improvement in agriculture and the introduction of efficient tools, still the influence was spasmodic, and it was the Celtic monastery that brought it to bear upon the people as a permanent force.

Very likely the special workers in the early Celtic community would be the same as those in the early English manor. We hear there of the ploughman, the *porcarius*, the herdsmen, and wards of wood and hedge, the ox-herd, the cow-herd, the sheep-herd, the goat-herd, the wood-ward, while the *ceorl* was chiefly employed in hedging the hunting-parks. The arable land was protected by hedges or quickset stakes, and was a constant source of work for the dependents on the manor.² We hear much in early Church-times of the bee-keeper (*apium custos*, *apiarius*, *mellitarius*). And his service in the later times when images were used in connection with religion is quite intelligible. "Wax," says the Hon. Daines Barrington, "must have been of considerable value, as the manufacture of tallow-candles is not very ancient. There is also a statute of Henry VI. with regard to wax-chandlers, the preamble to which sets forth that wax was used in great quantities, not only

¹ See 'Mediæval Scotland,' by Dr Cochran-Patrick, pp. 8, 9; and 'Celtic Scotland,' vol. iii. pp. 227-236.

² See Dr Andrew's 'Old English Manor,' pp. 205-229.

for the purpose of making candles, but likewise images of saints.”¹ In the early Celtic Church the office would be an important one, and would tend to a greater interest in the bee-keeping that is so prevalent among the intelligent peasantry to-day.

Notice must also be taken of the tribal meetings, where tribal affairs were discussed, and a yearly or triennial allotment of the common land was made among the tribesmen. These tribal meetings are not peculiarly Celtic, but, like the village community, human institutions among the Celts, and as the “preface of general history must be compiled from the materials presented by barbarism,”² it will not be uninteresting to recall them. Every parish of any antiquity has moot-hills associated with it, and tradition seems to speak of one such at the knowe near the Castle Law. The king was either present in person or, as we see from the Book of Deer, represented by the *mormaer*; next to him were the *toiseachs* or *flaths*, and with them all the freedmen of the tribe, who as kinsmen had the right of giving assent or disapproval to the business brought before them. In the immemorial democracies of the Uri and Appenzell, Mr Freeman tells us, we may see the institutions of our own forefathers; and while the element of birth must have counted for much in these early times, while relationship to the chief and the possession of cattle must also have been dominant influences, yet the appointments were formally ratified by the assent of the people. The ruler chosen took an oath to live for the good of the tribesmen, while the tribesmen responded by taking the oath of allegiance to him. The meeting-place was often a stone circle in a meadow near which rested the dust of their forefathers, and the associations of the place would give solemnity to the deliberations. In these early tribal meetings we see the root from which the threefold element in our constitution, of King, Lords, and Commons, has sprung, that the past is in the present, and that in the best of our constitution we have never

¹ Observations on the more Ancient Statutes, p. 41.

² Village Community, by Mr Gomme, p. 3.

departed from the traditions of the past, but improved or modified them to suit new needs. Mr Freeman is strong in his assertion that our wholesome improvements have only been the setting aside of innovations that had been acquired at later times, and the restoration or return to an older order of things: that we have shown a reverence for the past by a return to its best features—"by setting ourselves free from the slavish subtleties of Norman lawyers—by casting aside as an accursed thing the innovations of Tudor tyranny and Stewart usurpation."¹

Mr Gomme is of opinion that Roman influence did not alter an institution like this, which had struck its roots so deeply in human nature, and that Celtic Britain remained uninfluenced in its inner life.² Its existence reveals the toughness of tradition and the tenacity with which the past modifies the present; recent legislation with regard to parish councils is a return to the meetings at the moot-hills or stone circles of Celtic times in a modern form, and an adaptation of old customs to new circumstances. These meeting-places have kept alive throughout the centuries the principle of local self-government, and while the Roman ideal of government was centralisation, an endeavour was always made to realise it without interfering with an indigenous institution that had been helpful in keeping alive the healthy sense of independence and the best instincts of the race.³ Mrs Hemans refers to this in her lines:—

"There was heard the sound of a coming foe;
There was sent through Britain a bended bow;
And a voice was poured on the free winds far,
And the land rose up at the sight of war.

And the reaper armed like a freeman's son;
And the bended bow and the voice passed on."

¹ See Freeman's 'English Constitution,' pp. 41, 43.

² Gomme's *Village Community*, chapter x.

³ See 'Primitive Folk-Moots,' by G. L. Gomme, F.S.A., pp. 304-306.

The parish moot-hill was regarded as the surest way to summon for battle, and the "fiery cross" of later times was the means of calling the tribes together.

There were four orders among the Celts, who may be compared to the "professional classes" of to-day—the Druid, the Brehon, the Bard, and the Smith. A brief mention will be made of them, for the parish preserves a record of two of these orders, and it is absolutely certain that in a large and important Celtic settlement the other two would not be absent.

The Druids seem to have been medicine-men, teachers of the young, priests, interpreters of dreams, and enchanters.¹

The Brehon was the judge, who settled cases of dispute that arose within the tribe, and pronounced sentence upon offenders. In the earliest of times the Brehon was usually the king, but when the duties became too numerous, through the extension of territory, they seem to have been delegated to officials, who arose out of the very necessities of the case; and while the king reserved the power of revising their verdicts, very considerable authority would devolve upon them in the ancient community. In Ireland the ancient code of laws is called the "Brehon Laws"; and to them, and the researches of scholars in connection with them, we are much indebted for a knowledge of the ancient Celtic tribal system.

These two classes of officials would exist at Abernethy in connection with the ancient civil and religious *régime* before the introduction of Christianity; yet that there were other two we are certain from the evidence of the two place-names, Balvaird and Balgonie. The former means "the town of the bard," and the latter the "town of the smith."

Balvaird is the beautiful family seat of the Murrays, and is at present the possession of the Earl of Mansfield, while from it the present Lord Balvaird takes his title. Long, however, before it came into the possession of the old baronial families, it was the

¹ See 'Hibbert Lectures for 1886,' by Professor Rhys, p. 223.

property of the older Celtic bard, the poet-laureate of the tribes. In those days, when writing was unknown, his was an important function and a far-reaching influence. He sang of the deeds of heroes—of their prowess in battle and courage amid danger—of their loves and romances.¹ His simple verse (which through its rhythm could easily be committed to memory) was the means of recording the past, and perpetuating the influence of heroes after their death. Herodotus tells us that Homer and Hesiod made the theology of the Greeks, and the poets have always been the theologians of the ancient world. Mr Gladstone maintains that Homer was the maker not only of poems, but also, in a degree never equalled by any, (1) of a language; (2) of a nation; (3) of a religion.² And such must have been in great measure the influence of these early Celtic bards. They not only preserved history among the tribes, but moulded the language and developed belief in the Celtic Pantheon. The poet has a permeative, leavening power over the national sentiment, and in early times especially it was true to say, "Let me make the songs of a country, and let who will make its laws." The songs and ballads of the bard had an inspiring influence over the people in arousing courage in time of war and romance in time of peace; and we cannot wonder at him occupying an important position in the ancient State.

Dr Chalmers, referring to the decline of Druidism, speaks of it as degenerating "into delusive imposition," but not unlikely thaumaturgy was associated with it from the very first. It was an

¹ When Edmund Spenser wrote his "View of the Present State of Ireland" (1598) this order still survived in Ireland. He adds: "There is amongst the Irish a certayne kind of people called Bards, which are to them insteede of poetts, whose profession is to sett foorth the prayses and disprayses of men in theyr poems and rimes: the which are had in soe high request and estimation amongst them, that none dare to displease them for feare of running into reproche through theyr offence, and to be made infamous in the mouthes of all men. For theyr verses are taken up with a generall applause, and usually songe at all feasts and meetinges, by certayn other persons, whose proper function that is, which also receave for the same greate rewardes and reputation besides."—*Ibid.*, p. 640.

² *Juventus Mundi*, p. 174.

appeal more to the senses than to the spirit of its devotees, and an endeavour to quickened feeling by bringing into its service all that would arouse the imagination of a rude people. "In the parish of Abernethy," says the same author, "upon Farg Water, near Balvaird, the town of the bard, there is a rocking-stone which attracted the notice of Buchanan."¹ On the neighbouring hill of Balmanno, above the manse of Dron, there is another, 10 feet long and 7 feet broad, resting on a flat stone foundation. It still rocks on being pushed, and may have been used in connection with ancient druidism.² If the bards' songs became more and more associated with thaumaturgy, it is just possible that they may have become unpopular with those in power, or dwelling constantly on antique glory, their influence may have centred the people's devotion too much upon the past and too little upon the kings and leaders of the hour when they sang. Such an attitude would not increase their popularity with those in power, and the early Celtic Church on the other hand would not be favourable to the order as long as they helped to keep alive in the people's minds the pagan faith. Whatever be the cause of the hostility, we know that their influence had been much lessened, and that they had lost in many of the Celtic communities their lands and office. At the Synod of Drumceatt (A.D. 590) we learn that St Columba used his influence in their favour, and with his statesmanlike wisdom saw that in them was a power that could be employed in the service of the Church, and that what it needed was a redirection and a reconsecration.³ If the old Balvaird bards in early days sang of warriors

¹ *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 76.

² "On gently pressing the higher end with the finger, it has a perceptible motion, vibrating in an arch of between one and two inches, and the vibration continues for some time after the pressure is removed. . . . The motion [of the Balvaird one] is not now perceptible, being choked up with earth and gravel close to its centre."—*Statistical Account*, vol. ix. pp. 483, 484.

³ "So charming to our simple fathers was song—verse married to the music of the lyre—that we are told when Aldhelm, the Bishop of Sherborne, could not get his hearers to attend to his sermons, he disguised himself as a minstrel, and taking his station on the

and pagan gods, it is more than likely that in after-days, when they came under Christian culture, their song became a hymn, their war-dirge praise, and that they would give their influence on the side of the Church.

St Columba was probably a member of the order, and we have still preserved from his own pen an example of the Christian spirit consecrating a natural gift to its service, and transforming the Celtic bard into the Christian hymn-writer. It is called the "Altus," and unbroken tradition ascribes it to St Columba. We venture to give the first verse :—

"Altus Prosator, Vetustus,
Dierum et Ingenitus,
Erat absque origine
Primordio et crepidine,
Est et erit in sæcula
Sæculorum infinita :
Cui est Unigenitus
Christus et Sanctus Spiritus
Co-æternus in gloriâ
Deitatis perpetuâ :
Non tres deos depromimus
Sed unum Deum dicimus,
Salvâ fide in Personis
Tribus gloriosissimis."

Paraphrase.

"The Most High, the Father of all, the Antient of days, and Unbegotten, without origin, without beginning, and without limit, was, is, and will be for ever and ever : with Whom is co-eternal in everlasting glory of Godhead the Only Begotten Son, Who also is the Christ and the Holy Spirit. We set not forth three gods, but say that God is One, still holding ever the faith in Three most glorious Persons."¹

Another office of importance in the Celtic community was that bridge of the Ivel, he began to play. A willing congregation quickly gathered round the unknown bard, to whom he descanted on the deeds of heroes, till, having effectually enchained his audience, he passed to loftier themes, and sang the Saviour's love and the story of redemption."—Dr Hamilton's *Our Christian Classics*, vol. i. p. 11.

¹ The Altus of St Columba. Edited, with a Prose Paraphrase and Notes, by John, Marquess of Bute, K. T., p. 1.



Sculptured Stone.

PLATE I.

of the Smith, and the land possessed by him in this parish was Balgonie (bal-gowan).¹ Says Dr O. Schrader: "Round no calling of man has story woven brighter threads than round the craft of the Master Smith, which is referred in the mythology and folk-lore of most peoples to times of the hoariest antiquity."² If the Druid was the priest, the Brehon the judge, the Bard the song-writer in the early Celtic community, the Smith was the architect and artist. When the passion for war was strong in man's mind, and the desire for military glory the ideal that attracted attention, it can be seen how important was the office of the man who not only made armour, but beautiful armour, for the kings and leaders: the very existence of the tribe seemed to depend upon the weapons he made. Vulcan was the deification of some such early hero, and the ancient Celts had their Goban, around whose name early romance threw its lustre. After the introduction of Christianity his art was employed in making crosiers and chalices, bells and elaborate shrines for the early religious books. These works reveal artistic power of high order, and give us to understand the importance which the worker in metals possessed in the ancient community.

There is a sculptured stone found in this parish (see Plate I.) which commemorates the renown of this early craftsman, and reminds us of the Greek Hephaistos, who is represented in the Homeric poems as having (1) anvil, (2) hammer in his right hand, and (3) pincers in his left.³

Such is an endeavour to recall the features of the early Celtic people who lived here in former days: we have seen something of their social and political life; we will try to emphasise the leading aspects of their early religious life before passing to the great transition—the introduction of Christianity by St Ninian and St Columba.

¹ Dr Joyce's *Irish Names of Places*, p. 214.

² *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan People* (Jevons' trans.), p. 157.

³ *Juventus Mundi*, p. 529.

CHAPTER V.

CELTIC RELIGION.

WE have learned that Picts and Scots claimed a common descent and spoke the same language, but however strong these bonds are in society, there is yet one far greater. It is religion. What forms a nation is a common language and a common faith—the former being the channel of communication between men, and the latter the binding power making society possible. Sir Henry Maine quotes the words of an Indian poetess that describe the immigration of a people, and they illustrate the point. “The poetess compares the invasion to the flowing of the juice of the sugar-cane over a flat surface. The juice crystallises, and the crystals are the various village communities. In the middle is one lump of peculiarly fine sugar, the place where is the temple of the god. Homely as the image is, it seems in one respect peculiarly felicitous. It represents the tribe, though moving in a fused mass of men, as containing within itself a principle of coalescence which began to work as soon as the work was over.”¹ The ancient village communities had a common worship; federation among the tribes was accelerated by it, and before such a fusion could take place among the Picts and Scots, as history tells us about, it is more than probable that there must have been either a common faith or an approach to it among them. Scholars say that riverside

¹ Early History of Institutions, p. 78.

valleys, subject to frequent inundations, have been the home of all the early civilisations;¹ but it is not a sufficient explanation of the social bond to aver that the common instinct for fresh water was sufficient to create the communities there: we can find the efficient cause of the combinations only in a common faith—in a worship of the same god or gods. Society by its repressive powers may give the “thou must” to its members, but it is only religion that can bring the higher sanction “thou oughtest.”

De Coulanges has said, “It is only a belief which could overcome the immense difficulty which men felt in giving up old habits and small liberties for the restrictions and disciplines of a more highly organised life.” Man’s own instincts and necessities demanded union in some form, but religion made it possible as a fact.² Before the land could become the basis of union instead of kinship; before the tie of consanguinity could pass into a territorial constitution, as it was in the period of which we write, a common faith must have struck its roots deeply into the minds of men scattered over a wide area. Law in ancient times derived its power from its associations with religion, and the lawgiver was regarded as standing in close relationship with the god or gods: such a belief pervades the early traditions of early nations, and is a witness to an underlying fact of consciousness. Marriage, again, seems to have had a religious character from earliest times, and the ancient king was not only commander of the army and judge in disputes, but also the high priest of his people. All the evidence goes to prove the saying of Hegel, that the idea of God constitutes the general foundation of a people.

The Celtic religion exhibits the characteristics of the Aryan religion. It is a recognition of the divine in nature; a sense of the infinite in the finite; of the supernatural in the natural. This was its initial form, but nature came to be regarded as the divine, and worshipped as god. The feeling of the divine in

¹ Lotze, *Microcosmus*, vol. ii. p. 207.

² See ‘*Early History of Institutions*,’ p. 74.

nature passed into the lower form of nature as the divine ; the recognition of the invisible in the visible passed into the faith of the visible world, as concealing, yet as being one and the same with the invisible.¹

The Celts came as settlers on the soil, bringing with them their beliefs from their early Aryan home ; and while as conquerors they would regard their Iberian predecessors as devoid of rights, while they would force them to speak their language and worship at the shrines of the new gods, it is not likely that the old cult would pass away without exercising some modifying influence on the new one, and without the new one assimilating some of the elements belonging to the old one. It is more than probable that in the Celtic religion there were elements retained of the old worship that was observed by the Basque people from the earliest of days.

The Celtic religion is a branch of the Aryan religion, and reveals the characteristics of the parent stock. Cæsar² could recognise at a glance the close similarity between the Celtic gods and the divinities of the Roman Pantheon, and equated them. He tells us that the Celts worshipped Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. Mercury was associated with agriculture ; he corresponded to Ogma in Irish, and was regarded as the special protector of the Tuatha Dé Danann and the inventor of the Ogam alphabet. Apollo was the repeller of disease — the “man-healer” or “man-protector” ; he was the “man-healer” because he was the “light-bringer.” Mars was the war-god, and in those days when war was the prominent passion, the chief god ; among the Celts he was the Mars Jupiter. His aid and sympathy were invoked for battle, and Cæsar narrates : “With regard to Mars, it is usual for the Gauls, as soon as they have resolved to engage in battle, to vow beforehand to him all the spoils they may take in the war ; so they sacrifice to him all the animals captured, and they bring all the rest of the booty

¹ See ‘Science of Religion,’ by Professor Max Müller, Lecture III.

² *Bellum Gallicum*, vi. 17.

together to one spot. In many of their cities heaps of these things may be seen piled up in their sacred places." Jupiter, with a wheel in his hand, represented the sun, and was cognate with the god Thor, who possessed the hammer called "Mjölner," and with it performed great deeds. Minerva was the goddess of trades and arts, and seems to have corresponded with the Irish goddess Brigit, worshipped as a poetess and seeress, as well as the patroness of the smith's work and the healing art.

Her cult was probably a widely spread one in this district, and the influence of her name among the Celts must have prepared them to attach the same reverence and devotion to Saint Brigit, to whom the church of Abernethy was dedicated. It is an instance of how the early Christian missionaries succeeded in transferring the veneration given to a pagan goddess to a Christian saint.

Her name is to be recognised in the name "Brigantes," and not unlikely they were so called from regarding Brigit as the tutelary goddess of the tribe; her cult was extensive in Britain, Gaul, and Ireland; her name was contracted into Brig. Says Dr Rhys: "The Goidels worshipped a Minerva called Brigit, who presided over the three chief professions known in Erin; to her province, in fact, might be said to belong just what Cæsar terms 'operum atque artificiorum initia.' How largely the prestige of the goddess helped to make the fortune of the saint who took her name, St Bridget or Bride, it would perhaps be difficult to say. . . . *Brig* meant, in Irish, pre-eminent power or influence, authority or high esteem."¹

Such are the five leading figures in the Celtic Pantheon; but polytheism does not end in so few, and we find that every place had its guardian deity, and every tribe its *eponymus* divinity.² Besides *matres* and *virgines* who were deified, Gaulish paganism had also its *Dominæ*. It is not unlikely that while the similarities between the Celtic and Teutonic divinities are to be traced to the

¹ Hibbert Lectures, pp. 75, 76; also pp. 1-74.

² Ibid., p. 103.

same source—to a common origin—the differences are to be explained by the independent workings of the human mind under different conditions in different countries.

We hear also of Nuada, Lud, Nodeus, and other gods in the Pantheon, of which Zeus was the president and head. Gwydion has been identified with Woden, and according to Professor Rhys they are representations of one and the same god, belonging to a time anterior to the separation of the Celts and Teutons.¹ He holds

that the Aryan nations before their separation cherished a belief in a hero or god to whom they owed all their comforts in life ; it was he that made the Sun shine and the Dawn keep her time ; and it was to him they looked for the weather they wanted. The first breeds of animals useful to man, whether domestic or wild, were believed to have been obtained by him through craft or violence from the jealous powers who wished to keep them from the human race. They traced probably to the same source the fire that served to cook their food, and the intoxicating drink which they knew as a stimulant and a source of inspiration. But their benefactor was believed to have undergone unspeakable hardship in his quest of the boons he conferred on their kind, and that for a time the jealous powers were able to wreak their wrath on him for his goodwill to man. It was probably this goodwill that constituted the gravamen of his crime, and not the crafty and unscrupulous way in which he had gone to work ; for that was calculated, in certain stages of civilisation, to call forth admiration rather than the contrary, while the habit of imagining both gods and demons to be jealous of the human race is familiar to all in the literatures of various ancient nations.²

To understand this ancient religion, it is necessary to recall that mythology is the early form of language. The interpretation of it all is to be found in the early belief that the world is peopled with supernatural agencies ; that there is a contest going on among them ; that the sunshine and the thunderstorm, day and night, are brought about either through the triumphs of the good powers or of the evil powers. The mythology of the Celt is the expression of the poetry that lay at the heart of the people ; it is the early

¹ Hibbert Lectures, p. 287.

² Ibid., p. 302.

form of science: man felt then that he could not rule nature, and that the only way he could acquire power over his own destiny was by entering into league with the powers that seemed to sway it. There was no dogmatic system of thought, or any regulative knowledge to control speculative fancy: Celtic religion was the outcome of the impression the world made upon an imaginative mind and a susceptible heart.¹ It was the natural forces of the world personified and worshipped; and hence we find that the Celts had a superstitious reverence for mountain-tops, for rivers, for woods, for trees; they felt a mystery about them which they explained by the belief that they were peopled by persons who could either prosper or harm them—prosper them if they entered into league with each other, and harm them if they opposed each other. The mountain especially spoke to early man of the eternal and enduring, while he felt himself to be the fleeting and evanescent; and, in the sense not so much of what life is as of what life is not, religion had one of the roots of its origin.

Professor Veitch recognises five stages in the feeling for nature as reflected in Scottish poetry—the first arising from a state of agreeable sensation, the reflex of sense energy, and connecting itself with a consciousness of life and sensuous enjoyment; the second, often co-existent with the first, and being a liking for and contentment with the beneficent aspects of nature; the third, an interest attached to land cultivated, made useful by the hand of men and subservient to human life; the fourth, that of pure, free nature-feeling, arising from a delight in the contemplation of objects; the fifth, a yearning for the invisible in fusion with the

¹ "In so far," says Principal Caird, "as the earlier nature religions contained any element of truth in them, it was truth which reached the human spirit through what may be called the suggestive power of outward and sensuous things. . . . Nature, natural objects and appearances—the bright and cloudless firmament, the starry heavens, the dawn, the rushing wind, the teeming earth, the shimmering sea—had for the awakening spiritual consciousness a representative significance immeasurably transcending anything that could be educed from them by formal proof."—Introduction to 'The Philosophy of Religion,' p. 177.

visible, for a higher presence around us that can speak to the soul through the senses.¹

The last stage here indicated is present as the first in the early religious consciousness, for man's intuition, childlike soul, and impressionable heart enabled him not only to delight in nature for itself, but also to see it as rounded by the Invisible, and to read in it as from an open Bible a message from God. The early sense of nature brought man into contact with a Presence—into nearness and touch with God; and it not only taught him a theology, it imparted to him also moral inspiration and help, as it does to all open fresh hearts to-day. In thinking of the nature-worship of former days, we are apt to forget that it would not have had its influence, or have become such a universal phenomenon, unless it had rested on a permanent element of experience. Nature, both in its grander and smaller aspects, spoke to early man directly of God, and his response was all the quicker because his mind was unburdened with the materialism of later centuries. Nature's myriad voices spoke to him of God, and not least so the songs of birds, which were there from the beginning to soothe, gladden, and refine. Says Professor Veitch:—

Too little do we think of what we owe to the gentle things of nature,—the mute forms that appeal to the eye, and the voices of the living things which appeal to the ear. Yet we have grown through these—if indeed we have really grown—to delicacy of feeling, to culture and refinement. This power has been working through the ages. There was always, in the old rude times, enough of violence and bloodshed, and rough, coarse, outdoor life. But there was more than this—there were quiet under-currents of inspiration. We talk of our forefathers as "Saxon warriors," and we speak of "the forests of the North," and we think only of rough strokes, of slaughter, of the chase, and the wassail bout. Yet, while "the raven of Ivan flapped his bloody wings over the dead faces on the battle-fields, the goldfinch and the nightingale," as has been said, "sang in the shade; the partridge, with her young, nestled secure in the corn-fields; the lark rose before the shepherd in the morning, and carolled over the husbandman at

¹ The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry, vol. i. pp. 11-21.

his labour ; and the rook, the pigeon, and the sparrow flitted around him, and claimed their pittance." The gentle things of nature were surrounding him and beseeching his heart—asking for tenderness, asking for sympathy. Think you they asked always in vain ? Think you there was no forecast in the hearts of the people of those times of the feeling in these immortal lines ?—

"The Being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves of the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom He loves.
.
.
.
One lesson, shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows and what conceals,
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With suffering of the meanest thing that feels."¹

Nature thus raised men's thoughts to God, and in some measure healed, softened, humanised the heart and mind ; it was ever an oracle of the living God, and prepared the way for the fulness of the light that our Redeemer brought to this world. Christianity recognises the divine in nature ; regards nature as a revelation of God, and in doing so, while it superseded the idolatry, summed up in its all-comprehensive message the truth and piety that were in early worship and gave them power over men.

Mr Ruskin has maintained that "in nearly every myth of importance you have to discern these three structural parts—the root and the two branches—the root in physical existence, sun or sky, or cloud or sea ; then the personal incarnation of that : becoming a trusted and companionable deity, with whom you walk hand in hand, as a child with its brother or its sister ; and lastly the moral significance of the image, which is in all the great myths eternally and beneficently true."² It was thus that Celtic religion kept the religious faculty alive, and prepared the way for the Christian message brought by St Ninian and St Columba.

Celtic religion is a form of animism—of the tendency to endow the sun, the moon, the sky, the earth with life, and to explain the

¹ The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry, vol. i. pp. 105, 106.

² Queen of the Air, p. 9.

nature of things by the presence of supernatural agencies.¹ Tree-spirits were believed, even, to give rain and sunshine, to make the crops, to bless families with offspring, and cause herds to multiply. The oak was regarded by all the Aryans as a sacred tree, and seems to have been one of their leading divinities before the dispersion; the Dodona oak, in connection with Zeus-worship, was sacred, and the murmuring of the wind among the leaves and branches was regarded as a message from the god. It is beautiful poetry, and reveals the impressionableness of early man.

Along with the endeavour to personify the powers of nature and worship them as divine, we can also trace another—the deification of ancestors. We have an example of this in the time of the Pictish king Nechtan, who immolated Abernethy to God and St Bride. He is identified by Professor Rhys with the Celtic god Nuada of the silver hand. The benefactors of the tribe were deified, and were supposed to fight for it in battle, even after their death.

Mr Gladstone in his study of Homer finds four main channels of approach for the human nature to the divine—(1) translation; (2) mixed composition; (3) affiliation; (4) deification. Affiliation, he states also, appears in four shapes—

- (a) The ascription of a divine birth or nurture to kings and princes as a class.
- (b) The ascription of a particular god as ancestor to a sovereign house.
- (c) More recent birth from a divine father. This god is always either Zeus or Poseidon.
- (d) Births of men from a goddess: few and all recent.²

What has been thus pointed out seems a permanent element in all the Aryan religions, and it is interesting to find a parallel, for the Greek god Poseidon corresponded with the Celtic Nuada of the silver hand, as Nuada corresponded with the Latin Neptune.

Again, there is another feature in the early Celtic religion

¹ See 'Golden Bough,' by J. G. Frazer, M.A., LL.D., p. 70.

² *Juventus Mundi*, p. 371.

brought before us by the lives of the early saints: we learn of mysterious beings, worshipped by the people, called *sidhe*. They were supposed to dwell in fountains and rivers, in mountains and woods. As has already been pointed out (p. 47), the name Sidlaw (*sidhe-law*) preserves the belief of the ancient inhabitants of this district in these "borderland" beings, who were regarded as having their chief abode on the mountain-tops. The ancient metrical life of St Patrick says of him—

"He preached threescore years
The Cross of Christ to the Tuatha of Feni.
On the Tuatha of Erin there was darkness;
The Tuatha adored the Side.
They believed not the true Godhead
Of the true Trinity."¹

The Book of Armagh tells us of St Patrick and his attendants being assembled one morning at a well near Crochan, the residence of the kings of Connaught, and being met there by the king's daughters, who regarded them as *sidhe*. The questions are interesting in so far as they give a glimpse of the early Celtic faith.

Lo, the two daughters of King Laoghaire, Ethne the Fair and Fedelin the Ruddy, came early to the well to wash, after the manner of women, and they found near the well a synod of holy bishops with Patrick. And they knew not whence they were, or in what form, or from what people or from what country; but they supposed them to be men of *sidhe*, or gods of the earth, or a phantom. And the virgins said unto them, "Whence are ye? and whence come ye?" And Patrick said unto them, "It were better for you to confess to our true God, than to inquire concerning our race." The first virgin said, "Who is God, and where is God, and of what is God, and where is His dwelling-place? Has your God sons and daughters, gold and silver? Is He ever-living? Is He beautiful? Did many foster His Son? Are His daughters dear and beauteous to men of the world? Is He in heaven or on earth? in the sea? in rivers? in mountainous places? in valleys? Declare unto us the knowledge of Him. How shall He be seen? How is He to be loved? How is He to be found? Is it in youth? Is it in old age, He is to be found?"²

¹ Dr Whitley Stokes' *Gaedelica*, p. 131.

² Dr Todd's *Life of St Patrick*, p. 451.

Such questions give us a glimpse of an early faith possessed by ideas that must have arisen from ancestor-worship. The anthropomorphism is strong; and the god or gods seem to have been conceived as magnified men. The *sidhe* were regarded either as personified nature-powers associated with trees and wells and mountain-tops, or the spirits of departed ancestors. The early Christian Church regarded them as evil spirits that warred against men. The superstition existed before the arrival of the Celt, and in it we seem to have a glimpse of the Basque belief. It is very tenacious, and in secluded districts is still found to linger. "The custom of setting empty seats at the St John's Eve feast for the departed souls of kinsfolk is said to have lasted on in Europe to the seventeenth century. . . . When Odico, Abbot of Cluny, at the end of the tenth century, instituted the celebration of All Souls, he set on foot one of those revivals which have so often given the past a new lease of life. . . . The Western Church at large took up the practice, and round it, on the 2nd of November, there naturally gathered surviving remnants of the primitive rite of banquets to the dead."¹

The memory of four great Pagan festivals still lingers in Scotland and Ireland—in fact, wherever the Aryan race has been. The first is the Beltane-festival, held on May Day. All lights were extinguished and relit from the sacred fire. In some parts of Ireland it is said to survive still in a modified form: all lights are extinguished, and a lighted *sod* from the priest's house is highly esteemed for the purpose of rekindling the fires.² The second festival was Midsummer Eve, when bonfires were kindled. The third was the *Samhain* or November Eve, the primary purpose of which was to pay homage to the dead, and was associated with the *sidhe* just mentioned. The fourth is that of Mid-winter—now known to us as Christmas Day, and associated with the central truth of the Chris-

¹ Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, pp. 37, 38.

² *Celtic Ireland*, by Sophie Bryant, pp. 92, 94.

tian religion. These festivals were all originally connected with the worship of the sun and moon ; and in them we find the roots of the later Church festivals.

Dr Frazer regards the fire-festivals of November and December as sun-charms intended to ensure a proper supply of sunshine for man, animals, and plants.¹

Pliny tells us of a Celtic festival, celebrated in the sixth month—*i.e.*, June—and it is probably to be identified with the Midsummer Eve celebration.² The statement is so explicit and bears so directly upon the subject that we quote it:—

The Druids, for so they call their magicians, have nothing which they hold more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree on which it grows, provided only it be an oak (*robur*). But apart from that, they select groves of oak, and they perform no sacred rite without leaves from that tree, so that the Druids may be regarded as even deriving from it their name interpreted as Greek. For they believe whatever grows on these trees to be actually sent from heaven, and to form a mark in each instance of a tree selected by the god himself. That is, however, very rarely to be met with, and when it is found, it is sought with much religious ceremony. They do this especially at the time of the sixth moon, the luminary which marks the beginning of their months and their years, and after the tree has passed the thirtieth year of its age, because of its having even then plenty of vigour, though not half the size to which it may grow. Addressing it in their language as the universal healer, and taking care to have sacrifices and banquets prepared with the correct ceremony beneath the tree, they bring to the spot two white bulls whose horns have never been bound before. The priest, clad in a white robe, climbs the tree, and with a golden sickle cuts the mistletoe : it is caught in a white cloth. Then at length they sacrifice the victims, with a prayer that God may make his own gift benefit those to whom he has given it. They believe that drinking of a potion prepared from it gives fecundity to barren animals, and that it is a remedy against all poison.³

Adding to this account the statement of Maximus Tyrius, that the Celts worshipped Zeus, and that the image of the god was a lofty oak, we see that this tree was regarded by them either as a divinity or in some mysterious way related to the god. The oak

¹ Golden Bough, vol. ii. p. 268. ² Ibid., p. 286. ³ Natural History, vol. xvi. p. 95.

was regarded by the people of Aryan stock as peculiarly sacred, and in the legend of Balder, killed by Loki with a mistletoe, there is evidently a myth invented to explain a ritual.

According to the myth [says Dr Frazer] Balder could be killed by nothing in heaven or earth except the mistletoe ; and so long as the mistletoe remained on the oak, he was not only immortal but invulnerable. Now as soon as we see that Balder was the oak, the origin of the myth becomes plain. The mistletoe was viewed as the seat of life of the oak, and so long as it was uninjured nothing could kill or even wound the oak. The conception of the mistletoe as the seat of life of the oak would naturally be suggested to primitive peoples by the observation that while the oak is deciduous, the mistletoe which grows on it is evergreen. In winter the sight of its fresh foliage among the bare branches must have been hailed by the worshippers of the tree as a sign that the divine life which had ceased to animate the branches yet survived in the mistletoe, as the heart of a sleeper still beats when his body is motionless. Hence when the god had to be killed—when the sacred tree had to be burned—it was necessary to begin by breaking off the mistletoe. For as long as the mistletoe remained intact, the oak (so people thought) was invulnerable ; all the blows of their knives and axes would glance harmless from its surface. But once tear from the oak its sacred heart—the mistletoe—and the tree nodded to its fall. And when in later times the spirit of the oak came to be represented by a living man, it was logically necessary to suppose that, like the tree he personated, he could neither be killed nor wounded as long as the mistletoe remained uninjured. The pulling of the mistletoe was thus at once the signal and the cause of his death.¹

The early teachers of Christianity seem to have proceeded not by the way of revolution, but of evolution : instead of seeking to eliminate this religious feeling that centred round the oak, they rather preferred to adopt the wiser plan of redirecting it—of consecrating it to Christian service. What had a pagan origin was used for a Christian purpose, and we will afterwards hear of nine holy maidens planting a church under an oak-tree at Abernethy, just as was done at Kildare—“the church at the oak tree.” Thereby, as by a natural transition, the feeling and associations that

¹ Golden Bough, vol. ii. pp. 245, 296.

centred round an ancient cult were transferred to a higher and nobler one.

The rowan-tree was also regarded by the Celts and Teutons as sacred, and as a preservative against the influence of evil spirits. Its berries were used in the brewing of some intoxicating drink, which was held as a blessing snatched from the powers of darkness for man by an early benefactor or god. The same virtues were attributed to it as to the *soma* in Hindu mythology. It was associated with poetry and inspiration. The English name is derived from the Swedish *rönn* or Danish *rønne*, and the Norse regarded it as sacred to Thor, who clutched it, according to their legend, when in a dangerous passage crossing a stream.¹ The Celts regarded it, in their superstitious days, as a means of warding away witches from their homes; and although that belief has now passed away, it is worthy of note that the rowan-tree is to be found planted near the doors of many of the old cottages. Thus the past is in the present, often as a survival, although its original meaning has disappeared.

The earliest Celtic temple seems to have been an oak-tree overshadowing a sacred well, with a slab hard by, which served for an altar, on which sacrifices were offered, and at which oaths were taken, in ancient times.² The oldest sanctuaries were probably woods, and De Brosses derives the word *kirk*, softened by usage into *church*, from *quercus*, an oak. Here again the past holds us, as well as in the names given to our days, which preserve the record of ancient divinities. Tuesday is the day of Tiu or Tyr, Wednesday that of Woden, Thursday that of Thor, Friday that of Frigga the wife of Odin, Saturday that of Saetere; while Sunday and Monday are also survivals of the time when the sun and moon were worshipped as divinities. We are ruled by the past, even

¹ See Professor Rhys, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 358-360.

² Sir John Lubbock's *Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man*, p. 279.

when unconscious of it: the past never dies, but exists among us in a transmuted form. The East was always associated with light and warmth, with happiness and glory; the West with darkness and cold, gloom and death. This has given rise to the practice of orientation: the parish church is due east and west, and the dead are always buried with the face towards the east. The early teachers of religion again sanctified in this a custom which had its beginning in the nature-worship of a far-distant and long-vanished past.

This custom of orientation took a deep hold of the Christian Church within the first four centuries.¹ In prayer it became the custom to turn towards the east, towards the "Sun of Righteousness." St Augustine said, "When we stand at prayer we turn to the east, where the heaven arises, not as though God were only there and had forsaken all other parts of the world, but to admonish our mind to turn to a more excellent nature—that is, to the Lord." It was more conspicuous in baptism. St Jerome said, "In the mysteries [meaning baptism] we first renounce him who is in the west and dies to us with our sins; and so, turning to the east, we make a covenant with the Sun of Righteousness, promising to be His servants." It is not a matter of wonder that the early Christians, adopting the forms of paganism, were regarded at first as sun-worshippers; but Christianity showed its divine power in being able to accommodate all previous institutions to its service, while it only needed a little time to manifest the differences. Mr Lecky² has said that there is no better test of the political genius of a nation than the power it possesses of adapting old institutions to new wants, and it is certainly a test of the religious genius that characterised the early missionaries, as well as of their penetrating intuition into the spiritual riches of the Christian religion, that they did not part with the past, but consecrated it by breathing a deeper

¹ Primitive Culture, by E. B. Tylor, LL.D., F.R.S., vol. ii. pp. 427, 428.

² Political Value of History, 1892.

meaning into it. "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual."

A part of the ancient cult seems also to have been the worship of fountains and stones.¹ They were called *gruaich*-stones, and were sacred to the sun-god. This must have been a widely spread form of idolatry, for the Council of Tours in 567 A.D. admonishes the Britons for it, "Veneratores lapidum, excolentes sacra fontium admonemus."

These stones may be the sculptured stones of the Pagan Period, such as are found north of the Forth; and if so, the reference goes far to show that the symbolism on them was intended to be of a religious character and not the representation of personal ornament, as has been supposed. The language was confused with the divinity of whom it was supposed to speak, and so the religion degenerated into idolatry.

As to the sacred fountains, we find from the lives of St Patrick and St Columba that worship of them was the prevalent form of idolatry; and so tenacious was the habit over the people that the early teachers sought to improve it by redirecting it—by associating the well with an early saint, and thereby centring the people's devotion on a holy personality rather than on a pagan divinity, that was regarded as possessing a malignant influence over them. Old customs are very difficult to uproot, and we find well-worship prevalent even after the Reformation in Scotland. In many of the remote parts of Ireland to-day, as in the Aran Islands, travellers will find it still prevalent, and the offerings of the people to the fairy of the well can be noticed on the little bush that grows near it.

The high priest of the Celtic cult was the Druid. He was priest, judge, necromancer, medicine-man, judge. Next to the king, he was the outstanding personality in the Celtic community, and the lives of the early saints contain frequent allusions to the opposition the Druids everywhere gave to the advance of the

¹ *Origin of Civilisation*, p. 300.

Christian religion in Pictavia. Adamnan tells us of one, called Broichan, who had been tutor to King Brude, and occupied an important and influential position at his court.¹ He is very indignant at St Columba, and tells him he will prevent him making his voyage across Loch Ness. "I can make the winds unfavourable to thy voyage, and cause a great darkness to envelop thee in its shade." St Columba goes to the lake with a large number of followers, and the Druids begin to rejoice, seeing that it had both become dark and that the wind was violent. "Nor should we wonder," says Adamnan, "that God sometimes allows them with the aid of evil spirits to raise tempests and agitate the sea." St Columba calls on Christ the Lord, and embarks in his currach, which carries him safely to the other side of the lake. In an ancient hymn attributed to him we find the words which express his faith, coloured by references to the prevailing idolatry :—

"It is not with the sreod our destiny is,
 Nor with the bird on the top of the twig,
 Nor with the trunk of a knotty tree,
 Nor with a sordan hand in hand.

 I adore not the voice of birds,
 Nor the sreod, nor a destiny on the earthly world,
 Nor a son, nor chance, nor woman :
 My Drui is Christ the Son of God."

Just as in the catacombs of Rome we find Christ represented as Apollo, so in Celtic Scotland it seems that He was represented to the people by the early missionaries as the Arch-Drui. It was the bringing of a great spiritual fact home to them in the terms of their daily speech and current ideas. Thus the early missionaries used the existing facts as means of conveying higher spiritual truths, and it is not improbable that the peculiar form of Celtic tonsure which characterised the early Church in Scotland was the druidical tonsure continued, while the tenacity of it as a binding form was not unlikely due to the fact of its antiquity.

¹ Bk. ii. c. 34 and c. 35.

CHAPTER VI.

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY: ST NINIAN THE FOUNDER
OF ABERNETHY CHURCH.

WE now know something about the people in this district—of their race, language, social conditions, and religious beliefs—and it was amid the circumstances just described that the Gospel was preached and the Christian Church was planted. It is not improbable, and certainly not impossible, that the Gospel may first have been made known here through Roman soldiers,¹ who, having heard it at Rome, and felt its spiritual power, would seek to communicate it to others. Such efforts, however, as far as we have any information about them, did not lead to any permanent result, and the first great Christian missionary in Scotland of whom we know anything is St Ninian.

Ninian was of the Britons and had been educated at Rome. He dedicated a church called Candida Casa at Whithorn to St Martin of Tours.² This is the record of the first Christian church in Scotland, and it is the work of St Ninian. It is said that he also penetrated into Ireland and founded a church in Leinster called Cluain Conaire, and it is certain that he was commemorated there on the 16th of September under the name of Monenn.³

The historian Bede preserves information for us which is in-

¹ "Christianity as well as civilisation became conterminous with the Roman empire."

—The Holy Roman Empire, by James Bryce, D.C.L., p. 13.

² Life of Ninian, by Ailred of Rievaulx, chap. iii.

³ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. c. i.

teresting in relation to the country of which Abernethy was the capital. He speaks of the provinces which St Columba and St Ninian evangelised respectively: "For, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 565, when, after Justinianus, Justinus the younger received the government of the Roman empire, a presbyter and abbot, by name Columba, remarkable for his monastic habit and life, came from Ireland to Britain to preach the Word of God to the provinces of the Northern Picts—that is, to those who are separated by lofty and jagged ranges of mountains from the southern regions. For the Southern Picts, who have their abodes on this side the same mountains, had long before, as they say, relinquished the error of idolatry and received the true faith by the preaching of the Word to them by Bishop Nynias, a most reverend and holy man of the nation of the Britons."¹ This statement is very explicit, and extends St Ninian's labours far beyond the district of the Candida Casa. It represents him as journeying northward, and preaching the Gospel among the Picts who lived south of the Grampians. In those days the quickest way to get the ear of the nation was first of all to get the ear of the king, and if Bede's statement is historical, there can be no reasonable doubt that St Ninian preached the Gospel in the ancient Pictish capital, and that the first church here may have been the result of his labours. It is a view which has evidence to commend it. We know that St Ninian consecrated a place of Christian burial at Glasgow, and it is not unlikely that the same may have been done at Abernethy, and thus there may be considerable force in the view of Mr Ferguson that the absence of tumuli in Abernethy and Brechin is to be accounted for by the fact that the kings of these provinces were at an early date converted to Christianity.²

The missionary labours of St Ninian were not confined to Scotland, but were carried to Ireland. The line of the ecclesiastical development followed, or rather was parallel to, that of the ethno-

¹ Ecclesiastical Hist., bk. iii. chap. iv.

² Rude Stone Monuments, p. 271.

logical development already pointed out. It is unquestionable that the Scots gradually but progressively acquired a predominant influence over the Picts, yet it is equally certain that the Candida Casa in Galloway, and perhaps the early monastic settlement in Abernethy, had much to do in the development of the monastic system in the north of Ireland, and so the Picts may have helped the Scots. The influence of Bretagne and Wales cannot be overlooked, but the strongest and the initial power in the building up of the early Irish monasteries was St Ninian, and his monastery at Whithorn was called the "Great Monastery" ("Magnum Monasterium").¹ Says Bellesheim:—

He ordained bishops and priests, and divided the country into districts, to each of which he appointed missionaries. . . . His monastery in course of time developed into a celebrated training-school of monks and missionaries. It was from hence that St Cairnach, "Bishop and Abbot of the House of Martin," crossed over into Ulster, shortly before Finnian of Clonard, from St David's in Wales, introduced monasticism in the south of Ireland. The seed was thus sown which was destined to spring up a century later in the person of the renowned Columba, apostle of the Northern Picts. Whithorn was visited by innumerable pilgrims from Ireland, many of whom made it for a considerable time their home. Among them are mentioned St Finnian of Moville, who devoted himself there to the study of the Sacred Scriptures and to the rules of the monastic life; St Enda, famous for his island school at Arann; and St Rioch, a relative of St Patrick. St Manchan, patron of Limerick, and one of the brightest ornaments of the Irish Church, was also a monk in St Ninian's monastery; and St Mugint composed there his sublime penitential prayer, which was used for centuries in the Irish Church, and is preserved in the Book of Hymns.²

An old church hymn said of St Ninian, and his early influence proves it to be true—

"In Paradiso Ecclesiæ,
Virtutum ex dulcedine,
Spiramen dat aromatum
Ninianus cælestium."

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. pp. 46, 49; Colgan Acta SS., p. 438.

² History of the Catholic Church of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 9, 10.

The Candida Casa will always be associated with his name, but it seems open to no manner of reasonable doubt that a district so outstanding in early Scotland as Abernethy, through its civil and royal importance, must have acquired also a religious importance because of its connection with St Ninian. If the annals of its first monastery had been written by eyewitnesses, we would not unlikely find that at the end of the Roman Period in Scotland (410 A.D.) it was surrounded with much the same sanctity as the Candida Casa, and exercised the same influence in the central and northern districts as Whithorn did in the southern.

CHAPTER VII.

ST TERNAN AND ST SERVANUS AT ABERNETHY.

"Colligite Fragmenta ne Pereant."

BETWEEN the death of St Ninian (432 A.D.) and the arrival of St Columba in 563 A.D. there occurs a period of historical silence that is only broken by scanty information, which we acquire from Fordun and the Pictish Chronicle: the former tells us of an early bishop, who not unlikely had the centre of his labours at Abernethy, and the latter gives us an account of a gift of land and the dedication of the Church of Abernethy to St Bride of Kildare. Both speak of the close connection between the two races, and are on the line of the development already indicated. The latter will be considered in the next chapter, and it is with the statement of Fordun that we have now to deal:—

In the year 430 St Palladius was ordained by Pope Celestinus and sent into Scotia as the first bishop therein. It is therefore fitting that the Scots should diligently keep his festival and Church commemorations; for, by his word and example, he with anxious care taught their nation—that of the Scots, to wit—the orthodox faith, although they had for a long time previously believed in Christ. Before his arrival, the Scots had, as teachers of the faith and administrators of the sacraments, priests only or monks, following the rite of the primitive Church. So he arrived in Scotland with a great company of clergy, in the eleventh year of the reign of King Eugenius; and the king freely gave him a place of abode where he wanted one. Moreover, Palladius had as his fellow-worker in preaching and ad-

ministering the sacraments a most holy man, Servanus ; who was ordained bishop, and created by Palladius his coadjutor—one worthy of him in all respects—in order to teach the people the orthodox faith, and with anxious care perfect the work of the Gospel ; for Palladius was not equal to discharging alone the pastoral duties over so great a nation.

And again :—

The holy bishop Terranan likewise was a disciple of the blessed Palladius, who was his godfather and his fostering teacher and furtherer in all the rudiments of letters and of the faith.¹

The history of Palladius is wrapt in obscurity, and all that we learn of him, over and above what Fordun tells us, is from a reference of the chronicler Prosper of Aquitaine, and from several allusions in the Lives of St Patrick, which are somewhat conflicting in their testimony. It is certain that he was a bishop in Ireland, and probably suffered martyrdom there ; it is uncertain that he was in Scotland, and founded the church of Fordun, which was afterwards dedicated to his memory.² Dr Campbell is disposed to think that he did labour in Scotland, and accepts the concurrent testimony of several writers that he died in the territory of the Picts.³ Professor Stokes seems to favour the same view.⁴ Dr Skene, followed by Dr Bellesheim, thinks that his labours did not extend beyond Ireland, where he either died or suffered martyrdom : they regard the legend which takes him round Scotland and lands him on the east coast, in the district of Mearns, as originating in the fact that the church of Fordun possessed the relics of the saint, which were brought thither by Terrananus, who, according to the Aberdeen Breviary, received baptism and instruction in the faith from Palladius, and after a life of service died and was buried at Banchory-Ternan.⁵ The association of Palladius with Scotland seems to have arisen through his connection with Terrananus, and

¹ John of Fordun's Chronicle, edited by Dr Skene, vol. ii. pp. 85, 86.

² Betham, Ant. Res., App. xxxvi.

³ History of Church of Scotland, vol. i. p. 91.

⁴ Ireland and the Celtic Church, p. 24.

⁵ Dr Forbes' Kalendars of Scottish Saints, p. 131.

putting together the two statements (1) of Angus the Culdee, in his Calendar, that speaks of "Torannan, the long-famed voyager, over the broad shipful sea," and (2) the additional statement of the scholiast upon this Calendar, "that Torannan, the far-famed voyager—that is, Palladius—was sent from the successor of Peter to Erin before Patrick; he was not received in Erin, whereupon he went to Alban; he is buried in Liconium"¹ (probably the old name of Banchory-Ternan),—we possess the key which helps us to understand why the legend arose that Palladius was bishop among the Picts.

Terrananus was one of the early missionaries, and the reference to him as a "far-famed voyager" indicates that he left his native land and came into contact with Palladius in Ireland, and after his decease introduced his relics into Scotland. This seems to be the only connection that Palladius had with Scotland, and the above explanation seems to get at the nucleus of historical truth beneath the additions of later ages. Dr Skene says: "We are left with Terrananus or Ternan alone as having any claim to belong to this period, and the dedications to him show that the field of his labours was the territory of the Southern Picts, who are said by Bede to have been converted some time before by Ninian."² Bishop Forbes says: "There seems no reason to doubt the tradition that this saint was the High Bishop of the Picts."³

Taking all the evidence conjointly, we learn something definite regarding this early bishop of the Picts, and his existence at this early period goes far to show that the Church system introduced by St Ninian had taken some hold upon the country. In the Missal of Arbuthnott Ternan is called "*Archipræsul et Archiepiscopus Pictorum*," and his festival was celebrated on the 12th of June.⁴ When we also recall the statement of Bower that Aber-

¹ See Dr Forbes' Preface to the Arbuthnott Missal, pp. lxxxii-lxxxiv.

² Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 32.

³ Kalendars of Scottish Saints, p. 450.

⁴ Skene's Fordun, p. 407.

nethy was the "principal royal and pontifical seat of the whole kingdom of the Picts" ("per aliquot tempora"), there seems no reason to doubt the statement of Thomas Innes¹ that Ternan's seat of episcopal government was Abernethy in Strathearn.²

Ternan's name is associated with the parishes of Fordun and Banchory in Kincardineshire, and with Brechin in Forfarshire, and these places were evidently about 430 A.D. in the Pictish territory of which Abernethy was the recognised capital, as they were formerly in the district of the Vernicomes, with Orrea as capital.³ It goes to corroborate the view already taken in a former chapter, shows that the civil and ecclesiastical interacted on each other, and amid the mists of an obscure period gives us a glimpse of the missionary activity connected with this ancient foundation, and associated with the name of this early Bishop. The Mass of St Ternan contains the following reference to him:—

"Almi patris Terrenani
Attollamus christiani
Laudes et preconia.

Ipsam pie deprecamur
In hoc die veneramur
Ejusque solemnia.

Vas et lampas sanctitatis
Pacis semper charitatis
Dirigebat fœdera."⁴

Besides Ternan, Servanus or St Serf is also mentioned by Fordun as a disciple of Palladius. Dr Skene does not think there is

¹ Civil and Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, p. 157.

² An ancient life of Tervanus seems to make not only this certain, but recalls that his relics were preserved at Abernethy: "Tervanum etsi Martyrologii tabulis non ascriptum, nostrates religioso semper obsequio coluerunt; templumque Abernethæ cathedrale ei dictatum, ac multa alia in eo regno. Scripsit 'Exhortationes ad Pictos,' lib. i.; 'Contra Pelagianos,' lib. i.; 'Homilias ex sacrâ Scripturâ,' lib. i.

"Claruit anno CCCXL. Obiit Abernethæ, quæ Pictorum regia, ubi sacratissimas ejus reliquias totius regni populus religiosâ frequentatione venerabatur."—Introduction to the Missal De Arbuthnott, p. lxxv.

³ See Forbes' Kalendars, p. 451.

⁴ Bellesheim, vol. i. p. 25.

any historical truth in the reference and rejects it. In the fragment of an ancient life of St Kentigern we read "that on his arrival in Scotia, Palladius found St Servanus there, and called him to work in the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth; and when afterwards the latter was sufficiently imbued with the teaching of the Church, Palladius appointed him his suffragan over all the nation of the Scots."¹ In this life the birth of Kentigern is placed at Culross, where he was educated by Servanus, and where he died in 603 A.D. This places his birth about 550 A.D., and puts Servanus considerably later than Palladius. Another reason against the supposition is, that in the life of Servanus no reference is made either to Palladius or Kentigern; he is there brought into contact with Adamnan, the Abbot of Iona and biographer of St Columba, and founds the church of Culross in the reign of King Brude (697-706).² In reality, Dr Skene concludes, there is a great anachronism in placing this Servanus as the instructor of Kentigern, and he belongs to the century after his death.³

Bishop Forbes, on the other hand, founding his opinion on the Breviary of Aberdeen, which states distinctly that there were two saints of this name, is disposed to think there is a historical nexus in the statement of Fordun. The first saint is called a Scot, the second an Israelite: the first may be connected with the first conversion of the country, the second associated with the mission of Bonifacius Quiritinus, who is said in the legend to be "a natione Israeliticus."⁴ The two names probably caused confusion, and the miracles attributed to the one were afterwards attributed to the other. In this way he explains the difficulty, and thinks that, like Ternan, Servanus the Scot may have been suffragan of Palladius. Apart from the authority of Bishop Forbes' name, considerable weight is added to the position by the statement of the Aberdeen Breviary.

¹ Forbes' *Lives of St Ninian and St Kentigern*, p. 123.

² *Pictish Chronicle*, p. 412.

³ *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 32.

⁴ Forbes' *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, p. 445.

Dr Reeves regards two points in the history of Servanus the Scot as authentic—that he baptised and educated St Kentigern, and that Culross on the Forth was his principal church. The lection in the Breviary of Aberdeen connects him also with the cave at Dysart in Fife, which was most likely used as a place of retirement by the Celtic monks when the monastic life was more fully developed.

In St Servanus the Scot we seem to have the glimpse of a historical personality, and an associate of St Ternan in his work. St Ternan in the north of Fife, St Servanus in the south of it, were evidently leaders in the same movement: they both give us indication of a connection between Ireland and Scotland, which will be more conspicuously seen in the dedication of Abernethy by King Nectan to St Bridget of Kildare.

Their presence speaks of the existence of an early British Church which was the outcome of St Ninian's mission, and brings before us two types of the early secular clergy who were at work before the Celtic monastery was established in the land. We would desire to know more about them, but must rest contented with the little which seems certain,—that they were pioneers of the Christian religion among the Picts; that they spent their lives in service and founded early churches.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEDICATION OF ABERNETHY TO ST BRIDGET OF KILDARE,
A.D. 460—SS. MODWENA AND BRENDAN.

THE Pictish Chronicle gives us an account of a gift of land by Nectan, King of the Picts, to the church consecrated by St Ninian. We are told that at the death of King Durst there had been a contest over the Pictish throne; that to him succeeded Talarg or Talore, the son of Amil; that Nectan, brother of King Durst, had been maltreated by Talarg and had taken refuge at Kildare in Ireland; that Talarg died after a reign of four years, and Nectan, informed of what had happened by St Bridget of Kildare, returned to receive his throne in 455 A.D. According to the Pictish Chronicle, in the third year of his reign Darludach, contemporary and disciple of St Bridget and afterwards her successor as abbess, came over to Britain as an exile. Two years later, this Nectan, son of Irb, King of all the provinces of the Picts, gave ("immolavit") unto God and St Bridget, Abernethy unto the judgment-day ("ad diem judicii"). Darludach was present at the immolation and returned thanks for the gift ("cantavit alleluia super istam hostiam").¹ The boundaries are also stated, and show that it

¹ "The mode of consecrating an immolation of land was by placing a sod (G. *fóda*) upon the altar at the offertory, and by singing Alleluia in procession round the boundaries. At the immolation of the church lands at Abernethy in the time of St Bride, the Alleluia is said to have been sung by the famous virgin Darluga. A gift of this kind was irrevocable: 'dictâ benedictione retrahi non potuit.'—Can. Hib., lib. xvii. (p. 54), concern-

was a very extensive gift, and included lands beyond the boundaries of the present village of Abernethy. The gift consists of lands from a stone at Apurfeirt (the present Aberargie) to a stone at Ceirfuill (the present Carpow), and from thence upwards to Athan. The length of the land is about four miles, but as Athan cannot be identified, it is impossible to say the breadth of it. The occasion of the gift, according to the Chronicle, is that Nectan, while an exile in Ireland, addressed himself to St Bridget and asked her prayers; that the holy virgin, after consulting God in prayer, assured Nectan of the divine protection, and advised him to return to his country, where on the death of King Talore he received his throne; that as a monument of his gratitude he gave Abernethy as a perpetual gift to God and St Bride.¹

As Nectan began to reign in 457 A.D., this places the endowment of the church with lands and its dedication to St Bride in 460 A.D., while the grant itself is interesting as being the first on record in Scottish history. Andrew Wyntoun refers to it, but mistakes the name of the king, and confuses it with a later tradition that refers to the time of St Columba:—

“Garnak-Makdownach neyst hym syne
Wes kyng and fowndyde Abyrnyethyne,

ing oblations.” Early Scottish Worship. Lee Lecture, 1895. By the Rev. D. Macgregor of Inverallochy. Pp. 6, 7.

¹ “Necton morbet filius Erip xxiiij regnavit. Tertio anno regni ejus Darlugdach abbatissa Cilledara de Hibernia exulat pro Christo ad Britanniam. Secundo anno adventus sui immolavit Nectonius Aburnethige Deo et sancte Brigide presente Dairlugdach que cantavit alleluia super istam hostiam. Optulit igitur Nectonius magnus filius Wirp, rex omnium provinciarum Pictorum, Apurnethige Sancte Brigide, usque ad diem judicii, cum suis finibus, que posite sunt a lapide in Apurfeirt usque ad lapidem juxta Ceirfuill, id est Lethfloss, et inde in altum usque ad Athan. Causa autem oblationis hic est. Nectonius in vita julie manens fratre suo Drusto expulsante se usque ad Hiberniam Brigidam sanctam petivit ut postulasset Deum pro se. Orans autem pro illo dixit; si perveniens ad patriam tuam Dominus miserebitur tui; regnum Pictorum in pace possidebis.”—Pictish Chronicle, edited by Dr Skene, pp. 6, 7. *Athan* means a little ford; *Lethfloss*, the graceful waterfall. Both have disappeared as place-names, but the latter was at once recognised by an intelligent Norwegian, and evidently points to Scandinavian influence.

In[to] Stratherne, in that tyde,
In till the honoure off Sanct Bryde.
The fyrst tyme may be notyd here,
Conwertyd quhen the Pechtys were.”¹

There is a little poetical licence, not unlikely, in the use of the king's name, and there seems no reason to doubt the historical accuracy of the Pictish Chronicle in the matter, for it is verified by later history and tradition. It identifies King Nectan with Abernethy, and is on the line of all previous and subsequent history.² The only difficulty in connection with the date is, that it places the dedication of the church in Bridget's lifetime. But in connection with this we have to recall that it was no uncommon occurrence for the early saints to receive a grant of land in their lifetime for a church,³ and Dr Campbell, referring to the dedication of St Ninian's church to St Martin of Tours, says: "This and the dedication of another church at Canterbury to St Martin, were exceptions to the British practice, which prevailed till towards the end of the seventh century, of not dedicating a church to any saint already dead, but of calling it by the name of its living founder." ⁴

At any rate there can be no reasonable doubt, even if the year 460 A.D. be questioned, that at a very early date the church of Abernethy was dedicated to St Bridget, nor is there any need to doubt the statement that this St Bridget was the saint of Kildare.⁵ The whole history of the Celtic Church here shows its

¹ The Orygynall Cronykil of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 37.

² King Nectan seems also to have had a seat at Naughton in the parish of Balmerino. Referring to this property, the Rev. Dr Taylor says: "The old name of Naughton, as given in the Register of St Andrews, is Hyhat-nachton. This is evidently composed of *aite*, a place, which when aspirated would be written Haite, and Nachton, the name of a Pictish king by whom Abernethy was restored. It means the dwelling-place of Nachton, and very likely was one of his seats."—Historical Antiquities of Fife, p. 335.

³ See Haddan and Stubbs' Councils, vol. i. p. 155.

⁴ The Church of Scotland, vol. i. p. 81.

⁵ Gordon's Monasticon, vol. ii. pp. 275-279.

early connection with the Church of Ireland, and to cast doubt upon it is to introduce confusion into a history that is only intelligible by the help of this historical nexus. It is impossible to be dogmatic on the exact date of the dedication, but it is certain that it took place at a very early time.

Beneath all the legends and superstitions that arose around the name of St Bridget, there can be traced the record of a beautiful personality and a bright, consecrated life. Saint-worship ended in superstition, but it began in the healthy recognition of an outstanding excellence. In early times, wherever there was built a Christian church, there arose in the people's minds, through the name of its founder or patron saint, the memory of a beautiful personality, whose influence tended for righteousness and the advancement of the sweetest graces in the soul. To these early men the church was for ever saying:—

You have doubts and fears and trials and temptations, outward and inward ; you have sinned, perhaps, and feel the burden of your sin. Here was one who, like you, in this very spot, under the same sky, treading the same soil, among the same hills and woods and rocks and rivers, was tried like you, tempted like you, sinned like you ; but here he prayed and persevered and did penance and washed out his sins ; he fought the fight, he vanquished the evil one, he triumphed, and now he reigns a saint with Christ in heaven. The same ground which yields you your food, once supplied him ; he breathed and lived and felt and died here ; and now from his throne in the sky, he is still looking lovingly down on his children, making intercession for you that you may have grace to follow him, that by-and-by he may himself offer you at God's throne as his own.¹

It is impossible to measure the far-reaching and penetrating power St Bride must have wielded ; for when argument fails, and opinions cease to convince, the irresistible is a saintly life. Such an influence the early church of Abernethy would wield through its patron saint, and, viewed under such a light, we cannot doubt that it would be a centre of moral power and spiritual impulse in the kingdom of

¹ Froude's *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, vol. i. pp. 563, 564.

the Southern Picts. "St Bridget," as an early writer says, "led a very holy life, helping the needy in all their wants. She was very modest and humble, never looking on the face of a man, given to fasting, prayer, and good works, spotless and patient and gladly doing the will of God at all times. . . . She is the Mary of Ireland."

There is a hymn, attributed by Colgan to the sixth century, but evidently of a much later date, which describes her as a beautiful embodiment of womanhood, that could not fail to be creative of the best influence:—

"Bridget, the victorious, she loved not the world :
She sat on it as a gull sits on the ocean :
She slept the sleep of a captive mother,
Mourning after her absent child.
She suffered not much from evil tongues :
She held the blessed faith of the Trinity :
Bridget, the mother of my Lord of Heaven,
The best among the sons of the Lord.
She was not querulous nor malevolent :
She loved not the fierce wrangling of women :
She was not a back-biting serpent or a liar :
She sold not the Son of God for that which passes away :
She was not greedy of the goods of this life :
She gave away without gall, without slackness :
She was not rough to wayfaring men :
She handled gently the wretched lepers :
She built her a town in the plains (of Kildare) :
And dead, she is the patroness of many peoples."

Such words help us to realise the extraordinary influence St Bridget wielded in early times ; she was worshipped as an Avatar, as a re-incarnation of the Virgin Mary. Probably all the devotion that centred round the goddess Brig was transferred to St Bridget, while the memory of her saintly life sustained it. Beneath all the legends that gathered around her name, we can see that she was a pre-eminently good woman, whose life beamed with the beauty of Christ, and it was well for the progress of the Christian Church in Scotland

that at such an early period an embodiment of womanhood such as hers was realised and brought before the people by the dedication of a church. We will best understand her influence by comparing her self-sacrificing, unworldly, pure life with the type of womanhood which the ancient Greek religion gave its worshippers in the goddess Athene. The comparison, too, is justifiable, since St Bride occupied the same position in early Celtic worship as Athene did in the Greek ritual.

Mr Hayman thus describes Athene, verifying every statement by a citation: "Her character is without tenderness or tie of any sort: it never owns obligation, it never feels pain or privation, it is pitiless: with no gross appetites, its activity is busy and restless, its partisanship unscrupulous, its policy astute, and its dissimulation profound. It is keenly satirical, crafty, whispering base motives of the good (indeed she comprehends no others), beating down the strong, mocking the weak and exulting over them, staunch to a comrade; touched by a sense of liking and admiration for its like (she accounts expressly for her love of Ulysses by his roguery and cunning), of truth to its party, ready to prompt and back a friend through any hazard." Dr Mahaffy regards her as the impersonation of the Greek world; as intellect and energy unshackled by restraint. While she was the creation of the Greek genius and reflected its nature, as an embodiment she would react upon it and not in a redemptive way.

Christianity from the earliest days has shown an unequalled power in producing saints, and the presence of such has ever shamed the bad and made the good better; has always been felt as the breath of the living God in men. An early saint of this kind was St Bride, and the reverence that centred around her name would go far to humanise the Picts and hasten the reign of righteousness.

The early saints in the Celtic Church were not martyrs, but examples of the Christian life and teachers of the Christian re-

ligion ; they were either the founders of churches or of the monastery from which the founders of churches came. Early dedications have both a religious and historical significance, and it was indeed an epoch-making day in the history of Scotland when the first Christian church here was dedicated to St Bride.

There followed other dedications to her in Scotland, and her name was much associated with wells. No doubt the early missionaries did so with the view of freeing them from the superstitions and pagan associations that clustered around them ; and so they associated wells with the name of a saint so persuasive and dominant in her influence. The Rev. Dr Stewart, in his 'Twixt Ben Nevis and Glencoe,' quotes an incantation associated with a magical flower called *torranain*, that was regarded as helpful in warding off the evil eye :—

“ Let me pluck thee, *Torranain* !
With all thy blessedness and all thy virtue,
The nine blessings came with the nine parts,
By the virtue of the *Torranain*,
The hand of St Bride with me
I am now to pluck thee.”¹

It is interesting to observe in the early Scottish *Kalendars* that St Brigid's feast and that of her successor, *Darlugdach*, who was present at the dedication of Abernethy church, were on the same day—the 1st of February.²

On the hill of Gattaway, above the parish church, there is a spot called St Bride's Seat. From it is to be had probably one of the loveliest views in Scotland ; whether the saint was ever there herself or not, it is impossible to say ; at any rate, this name, coming from a remote antiquity, is an evidence that, like St Columba, she was believed to have a fine appreciation of natural scenery.

¹ *Folklore of Scottish Lochs and Springs*, by J. M. Mackinlay, p. 46.

² *Forbes' Kalendars*, p. 321.

Another interesting personality comes before us, belonging to this period, in St Modwenna or Monynne. She was known to St Bridget of Kildare, visited Scotland, and died at Longforgan (on the opposite side of the Tay below Abernethy). The Martyrology of Donegal ascribes the founding of the church at Longforgan to her.¹ Now the statement that she visited St Bridget and founded the church of Longforgan seems to leave no doubt that she was an early and a remarkable Irish saint, who visited this early centre of Christianity connected with her friend's name, and gave a missionary impulse to Church work. Bishop Forbes says:—

With all its difficulties, the circumstances of her life may be harmonised so as to suit one individual ; and knowing that St Aidan of Ferns has left his traces in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, remembering that the Irish Pandiana is still commemorated in Cambridgeshire, it is not impossible that the same saint should first establish a Christian colony in the north of Ireland, then penetrate through the half-Christianised Galwegia to the Campus Manann and Fortrenn ; then, like so many other Celtic recluses, make the pilgrimage to Rome, then found houses of Irish observance on the Tyne and Trent, and at last return to die in her own land, if the history that makes her yield up her spirit in her much-loved Longfortin be surrounded with difficulty.²

A well in this parish, adjacent to the Gattaway stream, was known to the old inhabitants as Brendan's well, and the name still survives in the corrupted form, "Brendi Well." Adjacent to it are to be found large boulder stones, now somewhat scattered by blasting, but in all probability placed originally near the well as a guide for pilgrims.

St Brendan is the early Celtic saint of whom it is said that, after hearing heavenly music from the altar, earthly music was ever afterwards distasteful to him. He was contemporary with SS. Finbar, Kieran, Finnian, and Lenan, and at a later period of his life was one of the four holy founders of monasteries who found St Columba in the island of Hinba.³ Fordun states that he erected a cell in Bute, which

¹ P. 187.

² *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, p. 404.

³ Adamnan, iii. c. 17.

took its name from Bothy—"idiomate nostro bothe"; that he lived in Scotland about A.D. 531. He had many dedications in Scotland.¹ His name is remembered for its association with the seven years' voyage in search of the Fortunate Islands; and as, no doubt, there is underlying the legend some truth that helps to account for the overgrowth, it is not unlikely that he may have visited an early ecclesiastical centre like Abernethy, associated at that time with the names of SS. Ninian and Bride. Mr Matthew Arnold has a poem on the legend connected with the voyage in "the northern main." St Brendan's name is also connected with Alyth in Perthshire, and Tiree, where he is said to have founded churches; also with Kilbrandon at Seile Island, and Boyndie in Banff.² He was also connected with the neighbouring parish to Abernethy—Dunbarny.³

Tradition states that St Brendan died and was buried at Glamis in Forfarshire, and an ancient cairn there was known as "Brendi's cairn." All the traditions taken together must have some grain of truth to explain them; and as it seems beyond doubt that he did visit this district, it is more than likely that he must have been at the early Abernethy church.

¹ Skene's *Fordun*, ii. 381.

² Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 226.

³ *Old Statistical Account*, vol. ix. p. 155.

CHAPTER IX.

ST COLUMBA—BUILDING OF CHURCH AT ABERNETHY BY KING
GARTNAIDH IN CONNECTION WITH ST COLUMBA'S MISSION.

THE labours of St Columba are chiefly associated with Iona and the Northern Picts, or the people who lived north of the Grampians. Bede distinctly tells us that he was the apostle of the Northern Picts, and his outstanding work is connected with the conversion of King Brude, who had his royal seat at Inverness. In those days, to have the support of the king was to have access to his territory, with a sympathetic reception from the subjects who lived under his protection, and it cannot be doubted that the conversion of King Brude would help very considerably the progress of Christianity by enabling St Columba to preach the Gospel throughout the northern province.

The Pictish Chronicle¹ tells us that King Brude died in 584 A.D. Adamnan has difficulty in accounting for his death, and seems to be in perplexity as to how the intercession of the saint should not have prevailed. He explains it by the disappearance of a stone, which was regarded as being able to work miracles. "Wonderful to relate, however, when this same stone was in request for any who were sick, whose term of life had arrived, it could never be found. Thus on the day King Brude died it was sought for, but

¹ Skene's edition, p. 67.

could not be found in the place in which it had been previously preserved.”¹

His successor was Gartnaidh, who had his capital at Abernethy, and of him the Pictish Chronicle says: “He built the church of Abernethy two hundred and twenty-five years and eleven months before the church of Dunkeld was built by King Constantine, king of the Picts.”² Gartnaidh reigned from 584 to 599, while Constantine reigned from 790 to 820, and so we can place the building of Gartnaidh’s church at Abernethy between 584 and 596. It will be not far off the mark to say 590 A.D.

It may be a correct conjecture that this church built by King Gartnaidh was of stone, and would take the place of the one founded by St Ninian and consecrated to St Bridget of Kildare, which not unlikely was formed of wood and wattles, in accordance with the early Scottish custom. Generally speaking, the Scottish churches at this period were of wood,³ but it seems more than probable that King Gartnaidh would not build the church here of less costly material than his palace, and that he would seek to make it worthy of the object for which it was dedicated, as well as of his own kingly dignity.

This work, too, is on the line of the history already indicated: it shows the sanctity that Abernethy had acquired at this early period, and evidently the king felt that the place to erect a monument to the progress of the new religion was at this place of consecrated associations. The religious importance of Abernethy at this period seems also to have increased its political importance, for it is certain that King Brude’s successor on the throne had his royal seat, not on the banks of the Ness, but on the banks of Tay. It points to a confederation between the Northern and Southern Picts, and seems to intimate that the civil importance arose from the religious pre-eminence and sanctity of Abernethy.

¹ *Ancient Lives of the Scottish Saints*, translated by Rev. Dr Metcalfe, p. 125.

² *Pictish Chronicle*, p. 201. ³ Dr Stuart’s *Introduction to the Book of Deer*, p. clv.

Another interesting testimony to this is to be found in the ancient tract called the 'Amra Columcille,' which puts it beyond any reasonable doubt, and strengthens Dr Skene's view that St Columba, the apostle of the Northern Picts, conducted a mission among the Southern Picts from 584-597 A.D.¹ The tract says, referring to the death of St Columba: "The teacher is not, who used to teach the *tuatha*, or tribes, of Toi;" and the gloss upon it is: "The teacher who used to teach the tribes who were around Tai. It is the name of a river in Alban." Again: "He subdued the mouths of the fierce who were at Toi with the will of the king," which is thus glossed: "He subdued the mouths of the fierce with the *ardrig* or supreme king of Toi: though it was what they wished—to say evil, so it is a blessing they used to make, *ut fuit Balam*."²

The Pictish Chronicle and the 'Amra Columcille' are here in perfect harmony. The dates are the same. Gartnaidh is called the supreme king of the Tay, which is explicitly called a river in Alban; St Columba is represented as subduing the fierce (probably the Druids) with the help of the king. The description of the people as divided into *tuatha*, with a supreme king over them, points to confederation, and is in harmony with what we have found to be their polity; so that there can be no doubt that this church of Abernethy, founded by Gartnaidh, was the outcome of St Columba's mission and the direct result of his preaching.

It is to be observed that while St Columba's visit to Scotland was predominantly religious, it was also partially political, and the latter aspect of it is visible in his visit to Brude, king of the Northern Picts, and seems also to explain his visit, as indicated in the 'Amra.' He was related on his grandmother's side to the line of Dalriadic kings, and, as a patriotic Irishman, was interested

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 135.

² Amra Columcille, by O'Beirne Crowe, pp. 29, 63.

in the welfare and political safety of the colony of his countrymen on the west coast of Scotland. His visit to King Brude would procure for them—in fact, did procure for them—the recognition and protection of the Picts north of the Grampian range; his visit to Gartnaidh, who had his royal seat at Abernethy, and the result of his mission there, would certainly procure the same recognition and protection from the Picts south of the Grampians. It thus ensured a double political bond, and this was unquestionably the result of his labours, and explains the object of his mission to be religious and political. It brings him before us as a great religious teacher and a far-seeing statesman; as the organiser of a Church which latterly produced the unity of Scotland and gave to his statesmanship a religious bond.

His visit would lead to a restoration of the Christianity introduced by St Ninian, and would be an imprimatur from a man of commanding personality on St Ninian's work. It resulted in King Gartnaidh following the example of King Nectan, and strengthening by his royal authority the work of the Church. In those days it was true, "*Cujus regio, ejus religio.*"

It takes a long time for religion to penetrate the minds of men, and if we suppose that the Christianity introduced by SS. Ninian and Bridget had no great permanence among the Picts, we can see that St Columba's visit would result in an outburst of enthusiasm that led to its revival.

Besides the good that resulted from his mission, it would be a joy to St Columba to visit a place of hallowed memories, associated with such outstanding names and such distinguished workers.

His visit also would strengthen the civil bonds between the Northern and Southern Picts, and produce more kindly intercourse among them.

Not unlikely St Columba would be present at the dedication of the old church at Abernethy, and we can recall the impression that

his presence and personality would make upon the people. His words must have been inspiring :—

“The sound of his voice, Columcille’s,
Great its sweetness above every company ;
To the end of fifteen hundred paces—
Vast courses—it was clear.”¹

Adamnan tells us that he was beloved by all, for a holy joy ever beaming on his face revealed the joy and gladness with which the Holy Spirit filled his inmost soul. The ‘Amra Columcille’ thus refers to his personality : “The people mourned him who was their soul’s light, their learned one, their chief from right ; who was God’s messenger, who dispelled fears from them, who used to explain the truth of words—a harp without a base cord, a perfect sage who believed Christ : he was learned, he was chaste, he was charitable ; he was an abounding benefit of guests ; he was eager, he was noble, he was gentle ; he was the physician of the heart of every sage ; he was to persons, inscrutable ; he was a shelter to the naked, he was a consolation to the poor,—there went not from the world one who was more continual for the remembrance of the Cross.” Such are the impressions made upon those who came into contact with him, and we recall with delight the day when St Columba appeared in the early church of Abernethy, with Gartnaidh and his tribesmen, to preach the gospel of the grace of God.

Says Dr Skene : “What King Gartnaidh did was to found a new monastic church where the earlier church had been, which, like it, was dedicated to St Bridget of Kildare, and this not only took place during Columba’s life, but is, in the ancient tract called the ‘Amra Columcille,’ directly attributed to his teaching.”

“In this work Columba had the assistance of his friend Cainnech, whose Pictish descent would render his aid more effective. Cainnech appears to have founded a monastery in the east end of the province of Fife, . . . which afterwards became celebrated as the

¹ Amra Columcille, by O’Beirne Crowe, p. 39.

site on which the church of St Andrews was founded, and as giving to that church its Gaelic name of Kilrimont.”¹ The church of Kennoway in Fife is dedicated to St Cainnech, and the foundation is not unlikely a monument of this early missionary tour of St Columba and St Cainnech from Abernethy.² If popularity is to be measured by dedications, St Cainnech only comes after St Bride and St Columba in early Scotland.³

The history of the early Celtic Church in Scotland is centred in the history of its early founders. Personality was everything in those days, and personality impressed itself upon the surrounding groups of men. In St Columba dwelt that force of character and contagious enthusiasm which moulded and inspired, and he was unquestionably epoch-making in the Church of early Scotland. His work left an indelible impression upon the tribes of the Northern and Southern Picts, and besides the restoration of the church of Abernethy, the churches dedicated to SS. Maluog, Drostan, Machut, Cathan, and Blaan speak of his activity among the Southern Picts.⁴

The presence of St Columba is as a bar of bright light athwart the darkness, and his history is that of the time when he lived. Adamnan is so lost in the personality of his hero that he tells us much about him and little or nothing of the people among whom he worked. St Columba is a splendid embodiment of the Celtic nature consecrated by the Christian spirit, and the very legends that arose around his name testify to the unique personality of the saint, and the unique impression he made upon his associates. Says the Duke of Argyll: “We must remember as a fact that Columba was an agent, and a principal agent, in one of the greatest events the world has ever seen—namely, the conversion of the northern nations.

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 136, 137.

² See Aberdeen Breviary and Dr Reeves' Adamnan, p. 268.

³ Bishop Forbes' Kalendars, p. 296.

⁴ History of the Catholic Church of Scotland, Bellesheim, vol. i. p. 83.

It is not surprising that in such times the providential ordering of events should make a deep impression on the minds of succeeding generations, and that almost every transaction connected with such men should be read in the light which shines from behind the veil.”¹

Says Dean Stanley: “His career remains a glorious proof how the ban of the visible Church against the moving spirits of mankind may turn out to be vanity of vanities. Whatever the shortcomings of Columba, St Brendan was right in saying that we cannot afford to disdain a man predestinated to be the evangeliser and apostle of such a nation as Scotland.”²

St Columba’s influence was magnetic and permeative: it goes far to show, what has been maintained, that the difference between an ordinary man and a man of genius is so vast as to be immeasurable; that the scale is one which reaches from zero to infinity.³ So great was the reverence for his name that the Church would permit no departure from his customs; objects associated with him were carried by the tribes into battle, in the belief that thereby victory would be achieved.⁴ This feeling lingered long, for in the tenth century we learn that the men of Alba adopted as their standard for battle the crosier of Columcille;⁵ “and in the twelfth century,” adds Dr Stuart, “we find a fair barony belonging to the keeper of the *brecbennoche*, a banner of St Columba; while in the same age the highest sanction to an obligation with some was an oath *per sanctum Columbam*.”⁶ Speaking of the Book of Deer, Dr Joseph Anderson says: “The terms in which the grants are expressed represent Columcille and Drostan as still present in the minds of the granters as the heads of the community to whom lands were given.”⁷

So great was the reverence attached to St Columba’s name in

¹ Iona, pp. 49, 50.

² Church of Scotland, by Dean Stanley, p. 31.

³ Duke of Argyll’s Scotland Past and Present, p. 460.

⁴ Reeves’ Adamnan, pp. 249, 319, 332.

⁵ Pictish Chronicle, p. 406.

⁶ Book of Deer, p. cx.

⁷ Scotland in Early Christian Times, vol. i. p. 173.

this parish,¹ and so influential the church through connection with him, that his relics were transferred here from Dunkeld, as we will see in a later chapter. It arouses the regret that the Chronicle of Abernethy, to which Fordun refers, is lost, and makes us feel what valuable and additional information we would have of his work if it could only be found.

¹ "One of Columba's chief monasteries among the Picts was at Abernethy in Strath-erne."—Maclear's *Christian Missions in the Middle Ages*, p. 89.

CHAPTER X.

THE CELTIC OR COLUMBAN MONASTERY AT ABERNETHY,
AND ITS ORGANISATION.

"O, how great was the fervour of all religious persons when communities were first instituted !

"How great their devotion in prayer ! how great their longing for virtue ! how rigorous their discipline ! how reverence and obedience to those set over them were in high repute !

"Their footprints—still remaining—testify that they were indeed holy and perfect men, who, by so valiant a struggle, trampled underfoot the world.

"Now he is reckoned to be great who just escapes open sin, or bears patiently his lot in life."—*De Imitatione*, bk. i. c. 18.

WE have now seen that the civil and ecclesiastical history of Abernethy are interwoven with each other ; that its early civil importance led to its ecclesiastical influence ; that its ecclesiastical influence deepened its civil importance. We have also seen that its early church is associated with the names of SS. Ninian, Bridget of Kildare, Ternan, Brendan, and Columba, and that its connection with such outstanding personalities must have attached to it great religious sanctity, and caused it to be venerated as the mother church in the territory of the Southern Picts.

We will now try to recall the nature of the early Celtic Church in the parish, and depict the outstanding features of the early Church life and work.

In a former chapter we have seen that the Picts and Scots were

of the same blood, and spoke the same language with dialectic differences; that they were coming into closer league with each other, conspicuously so at the period about the close of the Roman occupation of Scotland. The ecclesiastical history is on the line of this development, and the Pictish Church system was modelled after the pattern of the Irish one. During St Columba's time the influence of the Scots was becoming predominant, and the Church in Pictland exhibits the same constitution, customs, and usages as the ancient Church of Ireland. Christianity was accepted there with all the enthusiasm of the Celtic nature, and St Columba's life is interesting, not only for itself, but as the representative embodiment of the national genius. Enthusiasm is communicative, and the result of his labours was to carry towards completion a movement that had before his time been begun, and to build up among a kindred people a Church system the same as that which existed in his own native land. Iona contained a monastic system that was essentially Irish in its constitution, and the same holds good of the monasteries among the Southern Picts; they were all organised after Irish models, and their influence is both religious and political—religious in so far as they brought spiritual good to Alban, political in so far as they manifest the genius of the Scots, and indicate a direction which was before long to be the predominant one.

The Columban Church was monastic, and however corrupt the monastic Church did become in later times through the acquisition of extraordinary wealth and the indifference it introduced among the clergy, monasticism began as a high religious movement, as a very noble impulse that guided and moulded the minds of men. The Celtic monastery was sometimes founded on the mainland, but generally it was built upon an island in the centre of a midland lake, such as that of St Serf on Lochleven. It was not infrequently to be found on an isolated, unfrequented spot, yet it was such an institution that helped most effectually

to Christianise the people. The necessary thing was organisation, and that the monastery afforded. The people around lived in barbarism, disregarding of the sanctity of the domestic ties, of justice and righteousness. The monastic Church, through the humanities it represented, brought a healing influence to them. It brought order into the midst of disorder, virtue into the very presence of vice. It did not begin its work by attacking such tendencies, but brought the penetrative, diffusive power of holy lives. The Church received a grant of land from the king, as at Abernethy, and there it organised itself as a Christian colony under monastic rule, and consecrated itself by working, meditation, fasting, and prayer. The very unworldliness of its life came as a contrast to the barbarism of the warlike tribes, and the most irresistible of arguments was ever present before them, lives filled with purity, consecration, service. Such attracted the pagans at once, and when affection was created by saintliness, a preparation was made towards centring their faith in the religion that created it. Having done this, the monastic Church, whether on an island or the mainland, became a missionary centre, and its monks went about the country with the Gospels in their hands and the love of Christ in their hearts, leading the people to Christian belief and founding churches for Christian worship.

The communicative instincts of the Celtic nature, possessed with enthusiasm and faith, created religious chivalry, and it is a thrilling page in our early history to recall the bravery of these early missionaries. We hear of them reaching the far-off islands of the Hebrides and even farther north, and the marvel is that they could overcome such stormy seas in their little boats. They used three kinds of boats: (1) canoes, made by hollowing trees, such as the natives already possessed; (2) currachs, made of skin stretched over wicker framework, such as still can be seen in use by the primitive people of the Aran Islands off the coast of Galway; (3) small sailing-vessels thus described by Adamnan, "The sailors

having raised the sail-yards in the form of a cross, and having spread the sails upon them, we put to sea;" he also states that twelve such boats were necessary to convey trees to sea from the mainland for the repair of the monastery at Iona.¹

It was only brave, courageous men, inspired by faith, that could overcome such difficulties in a religious crusade. We hear of them not only facing the perils of the sea, but at that time encountering the equally great perils of the land; penetrating inland, travelling at the risk of their lives among wild tribes, by no means disposed to receive the Christian religion, and dominated by Druids, who deepened their hold over them by the sorcery which is always powerful with the ignorant.² Nowhere, unless in the Acts of the Apostles, will we find such heroism displayed or greater bravery in the presence of the dangers by land and sea.

Another important aspect of the Celtic monastery was its educative influence. Each institution possessed a school, and an important part of the daily work connected with it was the training of the young. Dr Skene says: "In the smaller monasteries the number of scholars was usually fifty. In the larger, of course, a much greater number were taught. Hence a single generation was sufficient to convert the mass of the people to be devoted adherents of the Church."³

The Columban Church from the very first emphasised the importance of education, and the school of the Candida Casa attained

¹ See 'Pinkerton's Lives of the Scottish Saints,' translated by Dr Metcalfe, p. 143.

² "From writings we gather what was the appearance of these pilgrim Scots. They travelled in companies, provided with long walking-sticks and with leathern wallets and water-bottles. They wore long-flowing hair, and were clothed in rough garments. Yet they were possessed with accomplishments which their rough exterior strangely belied. They were apt learners of the languages of the countries which they traversed, and addressed the people everywhere with all the fervour of their native eloquence. . . . They visited England, France, Switzerland, Italy, the Mediterranean coast, Iceland, leaving in all these countries traces of their presence which remain to this day. St Gall has given his name to a whole canton of Switzerland."—Dr Anderson's *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, 1st Series, p. 162.

³ *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 76.

great fame as an educational seminary. History does not tell us very definitely about the Pictish ones, but is explicit in its evidence that the Irish schools attracted scholars from other countries by their reputation for scholarship. Colgan, in his 'Life of St Servan,' tells us that fifty Roman monks came to Ireland to lead a life of stricter discipline and improve themselves by the learning of the schools there. Bede is also explicit, and says that many of the nobility and middle class of the Anglic nation joined these Celtic seminaries, and adds that Aldfred, who succeeded Ecgfrid, who was slain by the Picts in 685, was a man most learned in the Scriptures, and that for the sake of study he lived as an exile in the islands of the Scots.¹ The scribes in these schools attained marvellous proficiency in the art of ornamentation. Some regard the Book of Durrow as written by St Columba himself, while part of the Book of Kells has been also attributed to him. A catalogue of the library belonging to the monks of St Gall, compiled in the first half of the ninth century, contains thirty-two entries under the head of "*Libri Scottici scripti*"—books written after the manner of the Scots. The outstanding features of such are in the decoration of their initial letters and pages, and Dr Anderson regards the decoration as the development of a school, native and Christian.²

These scribes also created a native literary impulse, and we get a glimpse of this in the Book of Armagh, compiled in 807 A.D.³ The work contains (1) Memoirs of St Patrick, with Confession; (2) St Jerome's Preface to the New Testament, with Gospels in their order, and a Latin prayer for the transcriber; (3) St Paul's Epistles, with prefaces chiefly taken from the works of Pelagius; (4) the Apocalypse; (5) the Acts of the Apostles; (6) the Life of St Martin of Tours by Sulpicius Severus. The office of scribe also gave an impulse to the writing of hagiologies.⁴

¹ Bede, *Eccles. Hist.*, bk. iii. c. 27; bk. iv. c. 27.

² Scotland in Early Christian Times, p. 165.

³ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 423.

⁴ See Paper by Professor Lindsay, *Trans. of Glasgow Arch. Soc.*, p. 14.

We thus see from the general evidence that the Columban monastery in Abernethy would be a Christian colony, a centre of missionary work, and an educative institution; it will now be necessary to grasp more definite details. There are three periods in the history of the Celtic Church: the first is distinguished by a secular order of clergy; the second by a monastic order; the third by an eremitical order. The first was called *sanctissimus*; the second *sanctior*; the third *sanctus*. The Church of St Ninian is the Church of the first of these orders; the Church of St Columba belongs to the second; that of the Culdees to the third.

It is with the second of these orders that we have now to do, and its distinctive features will be best understood by contrasting them with the first. Our knowledge of them is derived from a document of the eighth century, and we learn that the saints of the first order, which continued for about a century after St Patrick, were all bishops, 350 in number, founders of churches. They had one head, Christ, and one chief, Patricius; they had one mass, one celebration; one tonsure, from ear to ear; one Easter, on the fourteenth moon after the vernal equinox; and what was excommunicated by one Church, all excommunicated. They did not refuse the services and society of women (or, according to another MS., either laymen or women), because, founded on Christ, the Rock, they feared not temptation. All these were sprung from the Romans, Franks, Britons, and Scots. The second order consisted of many bishops and many presbyters, 300 in all. They had one head, our Lord; they celebrated different masses and had different rules; their Easter and tonsure were as in the first order, but they refused the services of women, separating them from the monasteries. They received a mass from Bishop David and Gillas and Docus, the Britons.¹

The two orders must have somewhat overlapped each other, but

¹ See 'Celtic Scotland,' vol. ii. pp. 12, 13; also Fowler's *Adamni Vita S. Columbæ*, pp. xxxvi.

the first was secular and the second monastic; and the predominance of the second over the first indicates the growing influence and authority of St Columba. We shall see in a subsequent chapter the development of the third order and the assertion of the eremitical tendencies, but in the meantime we must observe, as far as the history of this parish is concerned, that while the church of St Bride, St Ternan, and St Servanus belonged to the first, the monastery of St Columba indicates the transition to the second order. We now enter upon the period when Christianity attacked paganism by organisation, by an ecclesiastical polity modelled after the pattern of the social polity, and resembling it in many features, and it was the genius of St Columba which gave rise to a Church in Ireland and Scotland, composed not of secular clergy but of monks, observing monastic rule and founding monasteries.

The Columban monastery was tribal, and existed for the good of the tribe amid which it was situated. But, like several others in Ireland, the ancient monastery of Abernethy must have wielded exceptional influence, from the fact already pointed out, that it was situated in the capital of the *ardrig*, or supreme king, who ruled over a large number of confederate tribes. This fact, along with the sanctity attaching to it from its association with the saints, already indicated, must have given it exceptional influence and made this monastery on the Tay equal in influence to the great Candida Casa in Northumbria.

Like the other monasteries, remains of which are to be seen at Clonmacnois and the Aran Islands, it would consist of scattered beehive cells grouped round a church or churches, and surrounded by a fortified enclosure, called a *rath*, *cashel*, or *lis*, with a ditch, near which was a palisade, usually placed for warding off wild beasts or brigands. The *cashel* was of pagan origin, and was indigenous to the country; it was at first accepted as a necessity for defence, and became a regular part of the monastic buildings,

continuing so until the twelfth century.¹ Thus the Church in its structural organisation adopted the forms of paganism, and yet there could not but be differences, for the object of the latter was defence, while that of the former was chiefly seclusion. Miss Stokes points out that the pagan fort is composed of two or three areas, the interior one being an oval or a circle or a half ellipse, whereas the Christian one deviates from all these in taking in all the oratories and buildings it was formed to protect; that the diameter of the latter was generally 140 feet, and guarded generally by one wall.² Within the *cashel* was the oratory or oratories, always rectangular, and made distinctively Christian by the symbol of the cross within.³ There was always a window to the east either square or arched by a single scooped stone, with an altar under it; the entrance was always at the western side. These sacred buildings were in the centre of the beehive cells.

Reasons have already been adduced for the supposition that the church built by King Gartnaidh was of stone, and not of wood and wattles; it has been pointed out in accordance with the testimony of ancient writers that stone churches existed in Ireland from a very early date.⁴ The Celtic churches of the early period (from the fifth to the seventh century at least and subsequently) were invariably rectangular, and never basilican in form. There is throughout the adherence to a primitive type, and "no apsidal termination exists among them;"⁵ most likely it was a type which

¹ See 'Scotland in Early Christian Times,' pp. 77, 78.

² Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, pp. 32, 33.

³ "It is more than likely that within the wall enclosure there would be seven churches or oratories—seven being regarded as the sacred number, and as identical with that of the seven Apocalyptic Churches in Asia. Thus there are seven at Glendalough and Cashel; and generally two or three are grouped together. There are still to be seen the ruins of seven at Scatterry and Innis Caltra in Clare, Tory Island, Donegal, Rattoo in Kerry, Inchclorin, Longford, and Aranmore in Galway."—Fergusson's History of Architecture, vol. ii. p. 229.

⁴ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, pp. 35, 39.

⁵ Scotland in Early Christian Times, p. 129.

reached these islands in the fourth or fifth century, and was quite distinct from the Roman type of the rounded apse. Mr Freeman thinks that they represented the earliest churches of all, anterior to the time when the basilica was Christianised and apsidal forms were introduced; Miss Stokes beautifully suggests that there survives in them the form of the "upper room" and the subterranean vaults of the catacombs. "The memory, not of the gorgeous basilica of the church of the emperors, but of such modest chambers, was the tradition borne by the first missionaries of the Continent."¹

The early Celtic Church was generally built near the tomb of one who was felt to be a spiritual splendour in his day, and this association of church and altar with the tomb is not to be interpreted as revealing the gloom of the early Christians in our country, but speaks, on the contrary, of the joy and hope and faith that possessed them. They thought of the grave in the light of the resurrection, and spoke of it as "the place of resurrection"; by building their churches near it, they thought of the time when 'Christ was to appear with all His saints.' This is not merely conjecture, but is founded on evidence from the lives of the saints. Thus in the Life of St Moedec we learn: "Another day some good men prayed God to show them the place of their resurrection, wishing to serve God near it. Then the Angel of the Lord said unto them, 'Go ye to St Moedec and he will show unto you the place of your resurrection.' When they had come unto him the saint said unto them, 'Did ye hear the voice of a bell when ye were coming thither?' They answered, 'We did not hear it.' The saint said unto them, 'Come unto me and I will show you the place in which ye shall rise again.' They went together and the saint of God showed unto them the place of their resurrection, and there those wonder-working men remained during their life and until their death." Some association of this kind would linger around the

¹ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, p. 38.

early church here, and the incident just quoted may be regarded as the history of many among the ancient dedications in Scotland.¹

The source of the little oblong church or churches within the *dun* has been traced to the East, and the type of the Celtic churches is the same as that of Egypt and Syria.²

Let us now consider the outward framework of the Columban ecclesiastical constitution.

The Columban Church was not one corporation, but an aggregate of several tribal communities in federation, and all regarding Iona as the mother Church. Each monastery was a Christian colony adapting itself to the tribal constitution, and was a great ecclesiastical family within the tribe. The abbot, not the bishop, was the head of the monastery and its churches, and to him the bishop was subordinate. "In ecclesiastical rank," says Dr Reeves, "the abbot was a presbyter and officiated at the altar, and pronounced absolution, but was not a bishop; hence he was emphatically styled *abbas et presbyter*. . . . Still the essential function of the episcopal office was scrupulously maintained: when a presbyter was to be ordained, the bishop was called in; when a distant province was to be brought within the Christian pale, a bishop was consecrated for the creation of a local ministry, and successors to him ordained and sent forth from time to time."³

Dean Stanley says: "It is not to be inferred that the early ecclesiastical system of Scotland was like the modern. It was, no

¹ As men, even under strong movements, do not easily rise above the conceptions of their past—as these older conceptions colour the new ones—there may be much in the suggestion of Mr Arnold to throw light on the severe plainness of the early Celtic churches: "The Celtic races have shown a singular inaptitude for the plastic arts; the abstract, severe character of the Druidical religion, its dealing with the eye of the mind rather than the eye of the body, its having no elaborate temples and beautiful idols, all point this way from the first; its sentiment cannot satisfy itself, cannot even find a resting-place for itself in colour and form—it presses on to the impalpable, the ideal. The forest of trees and the forest of rocks, not hewn timber and carved stones, suit its aspirations for something not to be bounded or expressed."—*The Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 101.

² Fowler's *Adamni Vita Columbæ*, pp. xxviii and xxxix.

³ Dr Reeves' *Adamnan*, pp. civ and cv.

doubt, as unlike modern Presbyterianism as it was unlike modern Episcopacy. The abbots were not bishops, but they were prelates. They were presbyters, but they had no presbyteries.”¹

The jurisdiction of the monastery was limited by the extent of the tribal territory, and in those days of warfare there must have been frequent changes in the area of influence; within the territory the episcopal office was discharged by bishops, who both lived within the monastery and were subject to the abbot's rule.²

This Church system, being grafted on the patriarchal form of society, gave rise to a law of succession, by which the abbots were heirs or successors (*coärbs*) of the founder both in blood and office. Succession to the office was conditioned by the law of *tanistic* succession; it was not in the individual but in the family to which the individual belonged; it was hereditary in the family, elective in the individual. When the founder of the monastery and the granter of the land belonged to the same family, the abbacy was vested in this family, who appointed a suitable individual from their own kin to discharge the duties of the office. There was thus within the tribe a “*plebilis progenies*,” a lay family in whom the tenancy of the lands was vested, who possessed a regular succession, and appointed from its members certain *coärbs* or successors to the first abbot, who formed the “*ecclesiastica progenies*,” and being celibate, had no lineal succession. Failing a succession in this line, it was customary to choose from a collateral branch.

On the other hand, when the chief and the founder belonged to different families, the succession to the abbacy was generally retained by the family to whom the saint belonged.³ The primacy invested in the abbot implied the duty of governing the religious affairs of the tribal churches, the influence of a religious leader, and the right to *can* and *conveth*—tribute and free quarters.⁴

¹ The Church of Scotland, p. 23.

² Introd. to Book of Deer, p. cxxviii.

³ See ‘Celtic Scotland,’ vol. ii. p 68.

⁴ See ‘Scotland Under Her Early Kings,’ vol. i. p. 10.

The aggregate of monks in the monastery was called *muintir* or *familia*; the monks were termed brethren: the elders gave themselves to devotion, meditation, transcribing the Scriptures, and attending to the church services; others gave themselves to the working of the grange farms, and mechanical labours; in Scotland they continued the work begun by the Romans, and were pioneers in agriculture. The brothers of tested character were called seniors; those under instruction, *alumni* or juniors; and those who tilled the soil, *operarii fratres*. In the Breviary of Aberdeen we get a glimpse of the saint belonging to this last order from the history of Nathalan or Nauchlan. He is described as a man of great sanctity and devotion, who, after he had come to man's estate and been imbued with the liberal arts, devoted himself and his wholly to divine contemplation. "When he learned that among the works of men's hands the cultivation of the earth approached nearest to divine contemplation, though educated in a noble family, with his own hands he practised the lowly art of cultivating the fields, abandoning all other occupations, that he might employ his mind, so as never to give place to the contagion of the base solicitations of the flesh. Meanwhile, as he warred his warfare against the devil and the perishing world, a terrible famine broke out among his neighbours, relations, and friends, so that almost the whole people were in danger of perishing by hunger and want of food. But God's saint, Nathalan, moved by the greatest pity, distributed all his grain and whatever else he had, for the name of Christ, to the poor."¹ It is a beautiful portrait, and one that gives us an insight into the spirit of the ancient monastery, with its devotion, its work, its beneficence.

Private property was unknown; all things were held in common. Celibacy was strictly observed, and the monks were called *milites Christi*, while the conventual life was *militia Christi*. Chastity, poverty, and obedience were their watchwords, and absolute loyalty

¹ Brev. Aberd., pars hyem., xxv. b.

was expected from all to the abbot. The discipline was very strict, and when the abbot summoned the monks in the dead of night to the altar, they were expected to attend for prayers and exhortation. "Obedientia sine mora" was demanded of all, and humility in the presence of superiors and in dejection for sin was enforced.¹

Hospitality, an outstanding feature of later monastic life, was regarded as a duty in the Columban monastery, and in this case religion sanctified the generous disposition of the Celtic nature, and gave full expression to its exuberance of kindliness. The guest received from the abbot the kiss of peace and was conducted to the *hospitium*, which was provided for visitors; there he received food and attention. Alms-giving to the poor was practised, and we learn from Adamnan that the monastery was resorted to for medical relief. The food was simple, and consisted of bread, milk, fish, and eggs; on Sunday and at the arrival of guests there was an improvement in food.

As to divine service, part of each day seems to have been given to the recitation of the Psalter and to prayers in the church, but the choral aspect of worship was not neglected.² The brethren who wrought on the farm were not expected to attend on ordinary days, and fatigue after their daily labour would most likely exempt them from being present at the vespers. On Sundays and saints' days

¹ Reeves' Adamnan, p. cv.

² "The chief musical instrument was the harp. . . . The reference [of Cambrensis at the time of Norman invasion] to the bass and the little notes makes it clear that the old Irish made some use of the principles of harmony; and there is good reason to think that singing in parts was practised in some of the Irish monasteries. St Jerome refers to the choral service of the Scots at Bangor, County Down, in the seventh century, and both Bede and Cambrensis refer to part-singing in one of the Northumbrian monasteries which was connected with Bangor. There is some indication, too, of part-singing in Iona; and, as another piece of evidence, a reference occurs in the Book of Leccan to the 'harmony of strings,' which, if the word is used accurately, would certainly show that some use of polyphonal music was made at the time to which the reference occurs. Moreover, the Irish *burdoon*, or refrain at the end of each verse of a song, was almost certainly sung in harmony. . . . The Highland Scotch music differs in no respect from the Irish."—Celtic Ireland, by Sophie Bryant, D.Sc., pp. 202-209.

all had to be present in church, to which they were summoned by the sound of bells. The Eucharist was celebrated on these days (*dies solennes*), and the office began on the eve of the feast. The priest, standing before the altar, consecrated the elements; when a bishop officiated, he broke the bread alone, in token of his superior office; when several priests were present, and no bishop, one was selected, who invited a brother-presbyter to break bread with him in token of equality. The chief festival was the Paschal or Easter solemnity, and the Columban Church rigidly adhered to its own day of observance, which was different from that of the Catholic Church. Fasting was regularly observed, and especially in Lent: St Columba set a conspicuous example in this direction. Baptism was administered to adult converts after due instruction in the faith, but we also hear of whole families being baptised.

The tonsure was from ear to ear, and the sign of the cross was used as a salutation and often as a charm. Reading, writing, and labour was the monastic ideal, and the chief subject of study was the Holy Scriptures, the Lives of the Saints, ecclesiastical writings, and works in the Greek and Latin languages. Writing was an occupation, and St Columba himself was much given to copying the Scriptures.

The ordinary garments were two: the *cuculla*, of coarse texture, made of wool, and of the natural colour of the material; the *tunica* was an under-garment, and occasionally white. The former consisted of the body and the hood, and instead of it, when the weather required, there was worn a warmer garment called *amphibalus*. When travelling or working the monks wore sandals, which were always set aside before sitting down to food.

Those who desired to follow a more ascetic life withdrew to a place, either near to or distant from the monastery, called the *dissert*. There is a reference to such a place, probably used by the Culdees of St Andrews, Culross, and Abernethy, in the place-name Dysart, which is now applied to a town in Fife: and the island

monastery of St Serf on Lochleven was most likely used for the same purpose by the early Columban monks here. It was a religious solitude to which holy men betook themselves.

Close to the *duirthech* or oratory was the *erdam* or sacristy. As part of the monastery there was the refectory or common eating-hall, termed *prointigh*, and in connection with it a *coitcheun* or kitchen. Close to the stream of water was the *muiluin* or mill—probably the present Ballomil in the village is the modern representative of it. Apart from the cells of the monks was the house of the abbot and the *hospitium* for strangers.

The connection between the Celtic Church and the tribe was close and intimate: in fact, the monastic Church of St Columba was the tribe in an ecclesiastical direction. The Church had rights to be discharged by the tribe, and the tribe had rights to be discharged by the Church. The rights which the tribe owed to the Church are thus defined:—

The right of the Church from *tuath*, or tribe, is tithes, and first-fruits and firstlings; these are due to a church from her members. . . . What are firstlings? Every first-born—that is, every first birth of every human couple, and every male child that opens the womb of his mother, being the first lawful wife, with confession according to their soul-friend, by which a church and souls are more improved; and also every animal that opens the womb of its mother, of small or lactiferous animals in general. First-fruits are the fruit of the gathering of every new produce, whether small or great, and every first calf and every first lamb which is brought forth in the year. . . . Every tenth birth afterwards, with a lot between every two sevens, with his lawful share of his family inheritance to the claim of the church, and every tenth plant of the plants of the earth and of cattle every year, and every seventh day of the year to the service of God, with every choice taken more than another after the desired order.¹

Among this list of rights it is interesting to observe that the Church at a very early date insisted on the religious observance of the seventh day, and so made even then its beneficent influence

¹ Ancient Laws, vol. iii. pp. 39-41.

felt in this as in many other healthful directions. The Church emphasised it as a due.

The right which the tribe demanded from the Church is thus stated: "They demand their right from the Church,—that is, baptism and communion and requiem of soul and the offering from every church to every person after his proper belief, with the recital of the Word of God to all who listen to it and keep it."¹ Such was the Celtic monastery in its life and work, and we will better grasp the intensity of both by recalling that the smallest monastery usually contained one hundred and fifty monks. We hear of larger ones, containing 450, 700, 800, 1500, 3000 monks respectively.²

The monastic influence was again used on the side of mercy in those early days of turbulence when might was right, through the privilege of sanctuary granted to the monastery by royal authority, and regarded with dread by the tribesmen as a privilege only to be abused at the peril of death. The supernatural largely loomed as a concrete power in ancient politics, and the belief, that the violation of the sanctuary would be avenged by unseen powers, tended both to increase ecclesiastical influence and to soothe to rest the vindictive passions, which had strong sway amid the weak State supervision. The Church erected crosses, which marked the sanctuary girth, and we will see in a later chapter that what was known as Macduff's Cross, and probably the present Mugdrum Cross, were the limits of the girth attached to the ancient Abernethy church. No doubt its influence was often used for mercy and protection until both sides of the case were heard.

The Columban monastery was the organised force of Christianity against paganism, and how splendidly it was equipped for the work we can see from the foregoing features of the system, which speak so eloquently of the creative genius of St Columba. Such was the monastery that was in ancient Abernethy, and most of the

¹ Ancient Laws, vol. iii. p. 33.

² Skene's Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 60, 61.

ancient churches in Midland Scotland and the East Coast must have been planted by monks from it.¹ They have attained greater prominence now, but still it is always interesting and instructive to recall the missionary impulse and the organisation from which they arose.

We have attempted to recall the early history of the Columban monastery, not merely in outward details, but in its inner spirit, and how well the lives of these earnest men must have told upon the surrounding population will also be seen from the Rule of St Columba, first printed by Dr Reeves from a manuscript in the Burgundian Library at Brussels. It was the table of duties for the Columban clergy, and we give it as one that would probably be well known in ancient Abernethy. The translation is as follows :—

The Rule of Columcille beginneth :

Be alone in a separate cell near a chief city if thy conscience is not prepared to be in common with the crowd.

Be always naked in imitation of Christ and the Evangelists.

Whatsoever little or much thou possessest of anything, whether clothing or food or drink, let it be at the command of the senior and at his disposal, for it is not befitting a religious to have any distinction of property with his own free brother.

Let a fast place, with one door, enclose thee.

A few religious men to converse with thee of God and His Testament, to visit thee on days of solemnity, to strengthen thee in the Testaments of God and the narratives of the Scriptures.

A person, too, who would talk with thee in idle words, or of the world, or who murmurs at what he cannot remedy or prevent, but who would distress thee more should he be a tattler between friends and foes, thou shalt not admit him to thee, but at once give him thy benediction should he deserve it.

Let thy servant be a discreet, religious, not tale-telling man, who is to attend continually on thee, with moderate labour of course, but always ready.

Yield submission to every rule that is of devotion.

¹ It is more than probable that the church which preceded the present church of St John's, Perth, was founded by clergy from the old Pictish monastery of Abernethy.

A mind prepared for red martyrdom.

A mind fortified and steadfast for white martyrdom.

Forgiveness from the heart to every one.

Constant prayers for those who trouble thee.

Fervour in singing the office for the dead as if every faithful dead was a particular friend of thine.

Hymns for souls to be sung standing.

Let thy vigils be constant from eve to eve, under the direction of another person.

Three labours in the day—viz., prayer, work, and reading.

The work to be divided into three parts—viz., thine own work and the work of thy place, as regards its real wants; secondly, thy share of the brethren's work; lastly, to help the neighbours—viz., by instruction or writing or sewing garments, or whatever labour they may be in want of, ut Dominus ait, "Non apparebis ante me vacuus."

Everything in its proper order; Nemo enim coronabitur nisi qui legitime certaverit.

Follow almsgiving before all things.

Take not of food till thou art hungry.

Sleep not till thou feelest desire.

Speak not except on business.

Every increase which comes to thee in lawful meals or in wearing apparel, give it for pity to the brethren that want it, or to the poor in like manner.

The love of God with all thy heart and all thy strength.

The love of thy neighbour as thyself.

Abide in the Testaments of God throughout all times.

The measure of prayer shall be until thy tears come;

Or thy measure of work of labour until thy tears come;

Or thy measure of thy work of labour, or of thy genuflexions, until thy perspiration often comes, if thy tears are not free.¹

¹ Appendix to vol. ii. of 'Celtic Scotland,' pp. 508, 509.

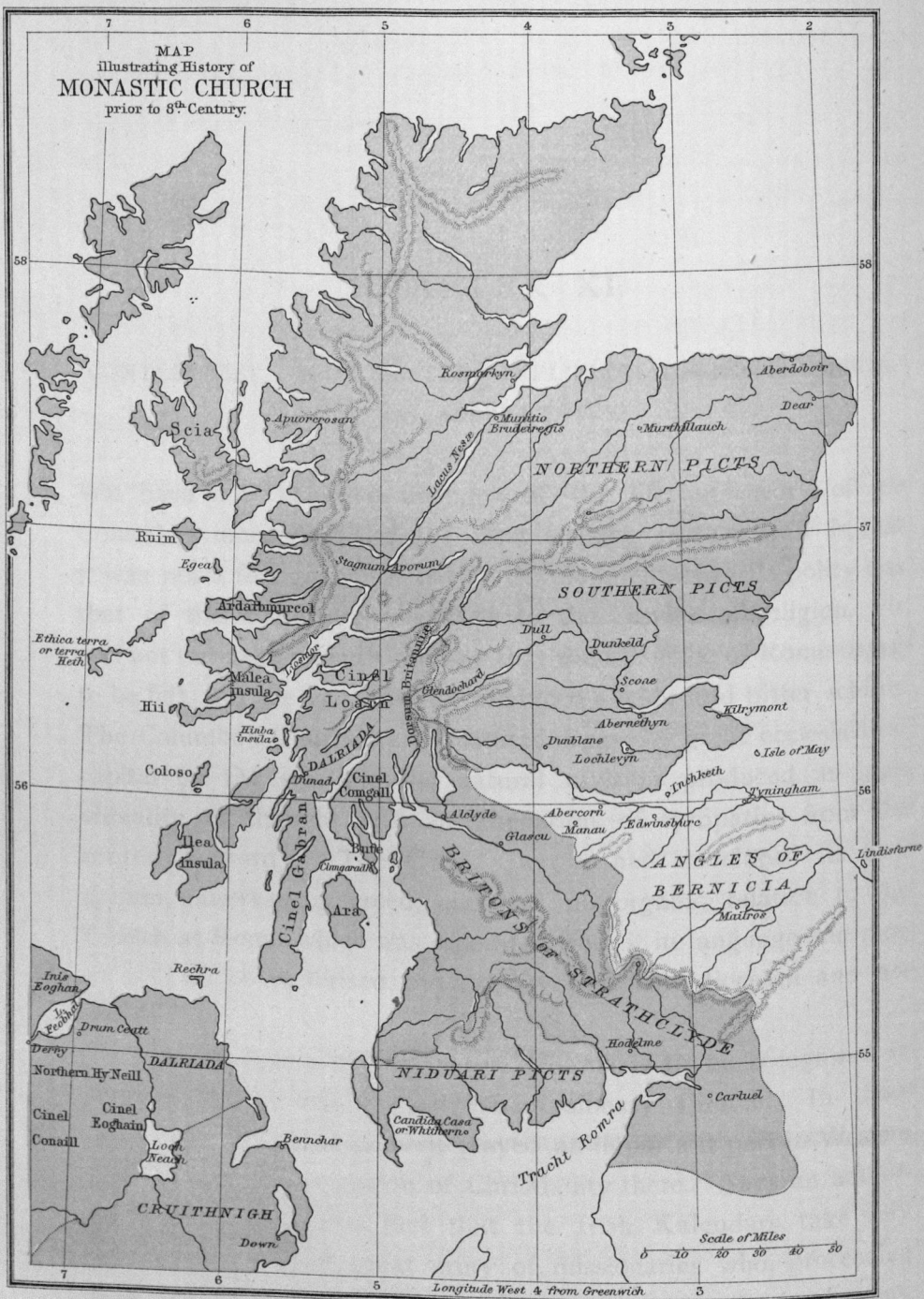
CHAPTER XI.

CONTROVERSY ABOUT EASTER—INFLUENCE OF NORTHUMBRIA
ON ABERNETHY.

WE have now acquired an idea of the life and work of the Columban monastery, and the most striking feature of it is, that it was not a foreign but a native development, that its polity was that of the country consecrated to the service of religion. It was not until the seventh century that the influence of Rome began to be felt, and the very contact produced a wide and bitter schism. The Columban Church was separated from the great ecclesiastical capital by the sea, and the natural division produced an individuality of thought and an alienation of sympathy from the central authority. The Celtic Church had developed its own system, observances, creed, and had no organic relation to the Church at Rome, which was separated from it in language and race, as well as characterised by a polity that was diocesan and not tribal.

The robustness of this native Church is to be recognised in the fact that it was an earnest missionary Church. In those early days the Celtic Church played an important part in Western Europe, and the extension of Christianity there. Says an authority: "It is a curious fact that the Irish Kalendars take very little notice of that great army of missionaries who, proceeding from Ireland, covered the Continent with monastic institutions,

MAP
illustrating History of
MONASTIC CHURCH
prior to 8th Century.



J. Bartholomew, Edin^r

and often contributed to episcopal sees worthy occupants, whose names are still remembered by a local worship. The extent of this influence can hardly be measured, and its existence is the most corroborative evidence of the high state of civilisation of Ireland and Scotland at the time in which this religious emigration prevailed. With every allowance for the wandering propensities of the Scoti of the dark ages, these institutions could not have taken root and flourished as they did without good reason. They must have supplied some want in Europe or they could not have continued.”¹

The Celtic Church, inspired by its missionary spirit, planted its monasticism in Europe, and endeavoured to introduce its peculiar customs in districts more sympathetic and open to influences from Rome. A representative of this early movement is Columbanus, whose mission to Gaul in 590 and his vehement assertion of Celtic customs aroused opposition, and made the Roman Church aware of the divergences that existed on what were then regarded as important matters.² It soon became visible to the Gallic ecclesiastics that these divergences consisted in a peculiar form of tonsure, and in the observance of Easter. The Celtic monks shaved from ear to ear and left the hair on the back of the head unshaved; the Roman tonsure consisted in shaving the crown and back of the head, leaving a circular rim or “crown” of hair.³ The Celtic monks also observed Easter on a different day from that of the Roman Church, and had not accepted, or rather were ignorant of, the change that had been made throughout Western Christendom. Such was the beginning of a controversy that was waged with bitter strife for over a century, and was only ended by the monks of the Columban Church being forced to accept the Roman methods in 716.

¹ Bishop Forbes' *Kalendars*, p. 443.

² See 'Ireland and the Celtic Church,' by Prof. Stokes, pp. 131-148.

³ Dr Campbell's *History*, p. 129.

The mission of Columbanus to Gaul was followed by that of St Augustine to Britain in 597, and this brought the Celtic Church more under the influence of the Roman Church, and created that policy which, in endeavouring to produce uniformity on secondary points and eliminate local autonomy, produced such disastrous results in later Church history. Laurence, who succeeded Augustine in 604, "not only," says Bede, "attended to the charge of the new Church that was gathered from the English people, but also regarded with pastoral solicitude the old natives of Britain and likewise the people of the Scots who inhabit the island of Ireland adjacent to Britain."¹ In conjunction with his fellow-bishops he addressed the following letter to the Irish hierarchy:—

To our lords and most dear brethren the bishops or abbots throughout all Scotia, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, bishops, the servants of the servants of God. When the Apostolic See, according to her practice in all the world, stationed us in these Western parts to preach to the pagan nations here, and so it came to pass that we entered into this island which is called Britain, before we were acquainted with it, supposing that they walked in the ways of the universal Church, we felt a very high respect for the Britons as well as the Scots, from our regard for their sanctity of character; but when we came to know the Britons, we supposed the Scots must be superior to them. However, we have learned from Bishop Daganus coming into this island, and Abbot Columbanus coming into Gaul, that the Scots differ not at all from the Britons in their habits. For Bishop Daganus, when he came to us, would not take meat with us, no not so much as in the same lodging where we were eating.

This letter had no results; each side adhered tenaciously to its custom, and the last sentence reveals the spirit in which the question was regarded by the northern clergy. It was written during the time Laisren was Abbot of Iona (599-605).

While the Monastery of Abernethy must have had a peculiar importance through its connection with St Bride of Kildare, yet the influence of St Columba would overshadow it, and not unlikely, as the other Columban foundations, it would regard Iona as at this

¹ Hist. Eccles., bk. ii. c. 4.

time the seat of ecclesiastical authority. To understand the ecclesiastical development of the period, and the tendency of the situation, it is necessary to note two events that happened in 634: one speaks of the influence the Columban Church had in the north of England, and the reactionary influence the Roman party sought to wield through it in Scotland; the other speaks of the predominance of Rome in the south of Ireland, and the significance it had before long in the north and in the Scottish foundations.

1. In 634 King Osuald of Northumbria, as Bede tells us, "sent to the seniors of the Scots, among whom himself and his fellow-soldiers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of baptism, desiring they would send him a bishop by whose instructions and ministry the Anglic nation which he governed might be taught the advantages of faith in the Lord and receive its sacraments. Nor were they slow in granting his request, but sent him Bishop Aidan, a man of singular meekness, piety, and moderation."¹ The appointment of St Aidan as the missionary-bishop had important results:² it led to the formation of a Church in Northumbria that was the exact counterpart of the one in Scotland, and Bede is not slow to bear testimony to its efficiency: "From that time many from the region of the Scots came daily into Britain, and with great devotion preached the Word of faith to those provinces of the Angles over which King Osuald reigned; and these among them

¹ Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, bk. iii. c. 3.

² "In Scotland, where a primitive form of Christianity was received through St Columba and his Irish Scots, and where the changes which had taken place in ecclesiastical ideas at Rome, Carthage, and Constantinople were still unknown, the presbyter-abbot of Iona ordained bishops to the churches he had founded among the Picts. These missionary monks went still farther—they penetrated into England, they settled at Lindisfarne, they founded several of the great English Sees, having themselves nothing but Presbyterian ordination; and thus it may be demonstrated that as the Episcopacy of all succeeding centuries rests upon the Presbytery of the first, so the Episcopacy of England rests ultimately upon the Presbyterianism of Scotland."—*The Growth of the Church* (Croall Lectures), by Dr John Cunningham, p. 72.

that had received priest's orders administered to the believers the grace of baptism. Churches were built in several places; the people flocked joyfully together to hear the Word; possessions and lands were given of the king's bounty to build monasteries; the younger Angles were by their Scottish masters instructed; and greater care and attention were bestowed upon the rules and observances of regular discipline."

The island of Lindisfarne will ever be surrounded with hallowed associations through its connection with St Aidan and St Cuthbert; it will ever speak of the vigour and earnestness of the Columban Church; but we have to do with it at present only in so far as it brought the Church of the North into direct contact, if not into direct conflict, with the Church of the South, in which the Augustinian influence was predominant, and by which it was affected through the Synod of Whitby.

2. The same year is notable for another event in the south of Ireland which before long had an influence on the Columban Church. Pope Honorius, according to Bede, "wrote to the nation of the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of Easter, earnestly exhorting them not to esteem their small number, placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern Churches of Christ throughout the world, and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the Paschal calculation and the Synodical decrees of all the bishops upon earth."¹ The result of it was that "the Scots which dwelt in the southern districts of Ireland, by the admonition of the bishop of the Apostolic See, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom." The whole nation of the Picts and Northern Ireland, however, still rigidly adhered to their traditions and refused to conform.²

This statement of Bede is interesting in so far as it manifests the goal towards which things were tending: it also exhibits the Columban Church as assuming a position of bitter antagonism to it,

¹ Bk. ii. c. 19.

² Bk. iii. c. 3.

and refusing to acknowledge any form that derived its authority outside of the institution of St Columba himself.

Troubles were again looming in the north of England upon the same question. It seems that it had not been raised during the lifetime of St Aidan, or, if raised, his conciliatory personality soothed it to rest; but after his death, controversy was bitter, and a council of the Church was held to give a judgment upon the question under dispute. This was the famous Synod of Whitby, held in the year 664, at which the question was discussed by Colman for the Columban and by Wilfrid for the Roman side. Colman asked—

“Is it to be believed that our most reverend father Columba, and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, thought or acted contrary to the divine writings; whereas there were many among them whose sanctity is testified by heavenly signs and the working of miracles which they performed, whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow, nor questioned their sanctity?” Wilfrid replied: “Concerning your father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate and whose rule and precepts you observe, which have been confirmed by signs from heaven, I might answer that when many, on the day of judgment, shall say to our Lord that in His name they prophesied and cast out devils and wrought many wonders, our Lord will reply that He never knew them. . . . If that Columba of yours—and I may say ours also, if he were Christ’s—was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet should he be preferred before the most blessed prince of the apostles to whom our Lord had given the keys of the kingdom of heaven?” On Wilfrid thus concluding his speech, the king said, “Is it true, Colman, that those words were said to that Peter by the Lord?” And he said, “It is true, O king.” Then said he, “Can you show any such power given to your Columba?” And he said, “None.” Again the king said, “Do you both agree on this point without any controversy, that these words were said especially to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given him by the Lord?” They both answered, “Yes, certainly.” Then he concluded thus: “And I tell you that he is that door-keeper, whom I will not contradict, but as far as I know or have power, I desire in all things to obey his decrees, lest, perchance, when I come to the doors of the kingdom of heaven, there may be no one to unlock them for me, if he is averse who is proved to have the keys.”

Such was the decision against the Columban practice, and Colman,

seeing "his doctrine contumed and his party despised for not complying with the Catholic Easter and the coronal tonsure, returned to Scotland to consult with his people, taking the relics of St Aidan with him.¹ Thus was brought about the extinction of the Columban Church in Northumbria, after it had been recognised for thirty years as the Church of the country.

The Columban Church was thus being surrounded by a changed atmosphere, but still it exhibited the *immobilis inertia* for other twenty-four years. In 688, however, we find that Adamnan, Abbot of Iona and biographer of St Columba, proceeded on a mission to Northumbria, and returning home, "endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he himself had learned and embraced with all his heart; but in this he could not prevail."² The Church is thus divided: on the one hand the Abbot advocated the change, and on the other the monks resisted it.

In 692 A.D., at the Synod of Tara, at which Brude, King of Pictland, was present, the Northern Scots, with the exception of the Columban monasteries, conformed to Rome, and between 704-710 the schism at Iona seems to have been great, for the monks who were in favour of the Roman rite elected Conmael abbot, while the other party elected Duncadh. The controversy was settled by King Nectan, who in 710, says Bede, "renounced the error which with his people he had hitherto held, and submitted with all his subjects to celebrate the Catholic time of the Lord's resurrection."³ The Columban clergy still offered opposition to the king's decree, and were expelled in 717 from his kingdom.⁴ "It is possible," says Dr Skene, "that the monks of the monasteries recently established among the Southern Picts by Adamnan [Forglen, Dull, Glendochart, Inchkeith] may have conformed; but those of the older foundations, such as Abernethy and Cillrigmonadh, or St Andrews,

¹ Bede, bk. iii. c. xxv. and c. xxvi.

³ Ibid.

² Ibid., bk. v. c. 21.

⁴ Chron. Picts and Scots, p. 74.

were probably driven out: and thus with the expulsion of the family of Iona terminated the primacy of its monastery over the monasteries and churches in the extensive districts of the east and north of Scotland, which formed at that time the kingdom of the Picts."¹

It is a piteous example of a secondary and subordinate matter being resolved into a principle of primary and eternal importance, and it affords an early instance of what has been characteristic of most of the controversies that have marred the history of the Church. One can admire the veneration of these early clergy for the character of St Columba; one must regret that it became to them synonymous with the possibilities of development, and thwarted a progress that would have brought them into unison with a larger number of disciples. It is an instance of the *immobilis inertia* of religious people in smaller matters; it is an early statement of a principle that was explicitly stated at a later stage of history, and was fruitful of wide divergence, that in God's grammar there is no positive, comparative, or superlative degree. It is an early lesson in Scottish Church history, and if accepted at later periods, would have saved from many a division and soothed much bitterness to rest. In the eighth century the climax of a long controversy on a matter of secondary importance produced heart-burning and schism, became the end of an early monastic system and the transition to a new order of clergy. Such were its outward results, but who can now measure the wrong it did to the religious life of the people, and the revival of paganism it must have brought as a consequence?

Another of the results of this age of unrest was the secularisation of Church property. The disorganisation of the period was followed by the usurpation of secular lords, who became great territorial proprietors on the old monastic property. Bede, who saw it with his own eyes, deplores it in his letter to Bishop Ecgberct: "Those who are utterly regardless of a monastic life have got into their power so many places under the name of monasteries that there is

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 178.

no place at all which the sons of the nobility or of veteran soldiers may occupy. . . . Others are guilty of a still more grievous offence. For, though they are themselves laics, and neither habituated to nor actuated by the love of a regular life, yet, by pecuniary payments to the kings, and under pretext of founding monasteries, they purchase for themselves territories in which they may have freer scope for their lust: and, moreover, they cause these to be assigned to them by royal edicts for an hereditary possession."

The motive of this was to reserve the privileges of these early foundations, to retain their right of sanctuary and exemption from military service, and enjoy the temporalities without fulfilling the obligations they implied. The appearance of the monastery was thus maintained without its reality, and the old foundation of Abernethy, like that of St Andrews, passed into the possession of a layman, who became the head of a great territorial family.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PICTS AND THE ANGLES OF NORTHUMBRIA—BATTLE OF
MONCRIEFFE, 672 A.D.

It is a striking feature in history that great ecclesiastical changes are accompanied by great political changes, and that they are generally parallel to each other. Religion and politics cannot be separated, and every political question is at heart a religious question. A social upheaval is the concomitant of a religious upheaval.

Contemporaries have rarely a true perspective of the circumstances amid which they live, and history frequently pronounces matters to be of secondary importance, which were regarded by those who had relationship to them as of primary importance. To-day we can afford to regard as ludicrous the importance attached to questions of outward ritual, that rent in twain the early Celtic Church; still they were not such to those who lived through them, and we have just seen that the attitude assumed by the Columbites ended in their expulsion from the kingdom. They were supported by a large section of the people, and that sympathy did not fail to influence matters political. It created parties, and found leaders for these parties; and in examining the secular period so far as it relates to Pictavia in the seventh century and during the first half of the eighth century, we find that the

ecclesiastical strife is accompanied by political strife, and that the latter is not less warm and unsettling than the former. It is therefore necessary to make a short divergence here and examine the political history in so far as it related to this district.

To understand the struggle it is necessary to recall that Scotland of the seventh century was divided into four kingdoms: on the west coast (1) there was the Dalriadic kingdom, founded by a colony of Scots from the north of Ireland, and including Lorn and Argyll; (2) there was the kingdom of the Britons occupying Strathclyde; (3) the kingdom of the Picts, north of the Forth, and divided into two parts, that of the Northern and Southern Picts, separated from each other by the Grampian range; (4) to the south was the kingdom of the Angles, extending from the Forth to the Humber. In the seventh century we have a record of petty wars among these four divisions, and the ecclesiastical strife was deepened by the political disorganisation, while the social unrest seems to have intensified the religious animosity. It is not improbable that the conservative attitude of the Columban clergy is to be considerably explained by political antipathy. It is with the struggles between the Angles and the Picts that we have at present to do.

In 617 A.D., when their father lost a battle, Eanfrid, the elder son, fled for protection to the Court of the Pictish king, which was at that time in Abernethy; while the younger son, Osuald, went to Iona for refuge, where he accepted the Christian faith and was baptised. This was an important event, as when Osuald succeeded his brother in 634 to the throne of Northumbria, his influence was on the side of Christianity. He sent to Iona for missionaries, whose labours in his kingdom resulted in the founding of the Columban Church, with St Aidan as its presiding bishop. Bede brings him before us, too, as a warrior-king, for he sums up his reign by saying "he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into

four languages — namely, the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the Angles.”¹

Now this statement enables us to understand the keen feeling which already existed between the Picts and the Angles prior to the Synod of Whitby in 664, and the adverse decision then given to the practices of the Pictish Church did not lessen but imbibtered it. These facts are to be borne in mind at present, for they enable us to see the political currents; and when to them we add the racial antipathy to the Angles, who were called “barbarians,” “wolves,” “dogs,” “whelps from the kennel of barbarism,” “hateful to God and man,”² we can understand the ecclesiastical movements as well as the political ferment.

The kingdom of the Angles had reached through conquest to the Forth, and the Picts were making an attempt to be free from the servitude into which they had been brought. Eight years after the Synod of Whitby, in the reign of Ecgfrid, we hear of the revolt of the subjected Picts and of a fierce battle between them. There is an account of it preserved by Eddi in his *Life of St Wilfrid*, who evidently disliked the Picts as much as they disliked the new race in the south. He tells us “that in the first years of Ecgfrid’s reign the bestial people of the Picts, despising their subjection to the Saxons, and threatening to throw off the yoke of servitude, collected together innumerable tribes from the north, on hearing which Ecgfrid assembled an army, and at the head of a smaller body of troops advanced against this great and not easily discovered enemy, who were assembled under a formidable ruler called Bernaeth, and attacking them, made so great a slaughter that two rivers were almost filled with their bodies. Those who fled were pursued and cut to pieces, and the people were again reduced to servitude, and remained under subjection during the rest of Ecgfrid’s reign.”³ This battle took place in 672, and the two rivers are evidently the Earn and

¹ Bk. iii. c. 6.

² Green’s *Short History of the English People*, p. 14.

³ C. xix.

Tay, which unite at Abernethy. The fact that the capital was here, with a strong Columban monastery, seems to place it beyond doubt as the most likely place where, under the conditions already indicated, the contest would be. The Picts were defeated, and Drust, king of the Picts, was driven from his throne in favour of Brude, who was evidently friendly to the Angles.

We find Ecgfrid invading the north of Ireland in 684, and destroying the monasteries and churches: in 685 we find him again invading Pictavia, where he was defeated and killed at Dunnichen in Forfarshire. While all these facts seem to speak of an incursion of the Saxon population into the district north of the Forth, they also indicate an early religious war, and the victory of the Picts at Dunnichen gave new zeal to the Columban party, and made them more obdurate in their nonconformity. "From that time," says Bede, "the hopes and strength of the Anglic kingdom began to fluctuate and to retrograde, for the Picts recovered the territory belonging to them which the Angles had held."¹

In 688 we find Adamnan visiting Northumbria, and he seems to have had as an object the conciliation of the Angles; for we have already seen that, Columban as he was in sympathy, he conformed to the Augustinian observances, and on his return to Iona succeeded in winning over a section of his monks to the same view. But even his advocacy did not succeed in conciliating the bulk of opinion on the subject, and flushed by the victory of 685, the antipathy was maintained. The ecclesiastical and political forces are again parallel until 710, when King Nectan conformed, and in 716 expelled the nonconformists from his territory. He was influenced by the Church of St Augustine, and through him that Church acquired power and strength in Scotland. Church and State have been very closely related in Scottish history, and we quote his letter as not only illustrating this relationship, but as bringing about a condition of things which affected this

¹ Book iv. c. 26.

parish. Bede tells us that he agreed with his people to celebrate the Catholic time of Easter:—

In order that he might perform this with the greater ease and authority, he sought assistance from the nation of the Angles, whom he knew to have long since formed their religion after the example of the holy Roman and Apostolic Church. Accordingly he sent messengers to the venerable man Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Tyne at the place called Jarrow, desiring that he would write him a letter containing arguments, by the help of which he might the more powerfully confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time ; as also concerning the form and manner of the tonsure for distinguishing the clergy ; not to mention that he himself possessed much information in these particulars. He also prayed to have architects sent him to build a church in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and that he and all his people would always follow the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church as far as they could ascertain the same in consequence of their remoteness from the Roman language and nation.

Bede gives the reply sent to the king, and thus concludes :—

This letter having been read in the presence of King Naitan and many others of the most learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation, insomuch that, rising from among his great men who sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a present from the land of the Angles ; and, said he, "I knew indeed before that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully know the reason for the observance of this time that I seem convinced that I knew very little of it before. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you who are here present, that I will for ever continually observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation ; and I do decree that this tonsure, which we have heard is most reasonable, shall be received by all the clergy in my kingdom." Accordingly he immediately performed by his regal authority what he had said. For the cycles of nineteen years were forthwith, by public command, sent throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learnt, and observed, the erroneous revolutions of eighty-four years being everywhere obliterated. All the ministers of the altar and monks adopted the coronal tonsure ; and the nation being thus reformed,

rejoiced, as being newly placed under the direction of Peter, the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, and made secure under his protection.¹

With the expulsion of the Columban clergy the influence of St Columba, as the tutelary apostle of Pictavia, declined, and St Peter became the patron saint of the kingdom of Alban. Abernethy ceased also to be the capital, and from this time Scone emerges as the principal seat of the province, which included Angus and the Mearns or Kincardineshire; Atholl and Gowry; Strath-erne and Menteith; Fife and Kinross.² The decree thus took away the ecclesiastical and civil pre-eminence of Abernethy, and there seems to be no doubt that it was from the Moothill of Scone this mandate of King Nectan was read; that, as a consequence, it was afterwards called the Hill of Belief ("Collis Credulitatis").³ It seems also certain that the church, built by architects from Jarrow after the "Roman manner"—*i.e.*, with a circular apse and of stone—was the Church of the Holy Trinity at Scone, which Nectan dedicated at this time. It has been claimed by several writers (Dr Petrie among others) that there is in the decree a reference to the erection of the round tower at Abernethy: we are rather disposed to think that it belongs to the next century, and for this position we shall state the reasons in a later chapter.⁴

The church of Scone is referred to, and the ancient edifice erected there by Nectan is unquestionably a landmark in Scottish history: it is the first church raised on Scottish soil, of which we have any record, after the Augustinian influence became the dominant one.

¹ Eccles. Hist., bk. v. c. 21.

² See 'Celtic Scotland,' vol. i. pp. 280, 281.

³ Chron. Picts and Scots, p. 9.

⁴ It cannot be supposed that this Nectan can be the king to whom the Pictish Chronicle attributes the gift of land to the church of Abernethy and its dedication to St Bridget of Kildare. In the first place, there is the great disparity of time; and in the second place, even if this were not an insuperable difficulty, it is unlikely that in 717 he would connect it with the name of a Celtic saint, since all his influence was given to the introduction of Roman saints.

According to Tighernac, in 724 Nectan became a cleric and was succeeded on the Pictish throne by Drust, and this gave rise to further warfare, which we must try to unravel, as it is connected with the history of the district. It has been thought that the events recorded of this reign indicate an opposition between the party of Nectan, the previous king, and that of Drust. In 725 Simal, the son of Drust, is taken and bound, and in 726 Drust retaliates by subjecting Nectan to the same fate.¹ There now follows another revolution in the kingdom. Drust is driven from his throne by his brother Alpin, and in 726 we find that Nectan gives up his retired life and enters the lists as a competitor for the throne. Another claimant appears in Aengus of Fortrenn. A struggle follows, in which the four take part: the first battle was fought at "Monaigh Craebi" or Moncrieffe—a hill to the north-west of Abernethy between the Tay and the Earn—between Aengus and Alpin, in which Aengus was victorious. The next battle is between Alpin and Nectan at "Caislen Credi"—the Castle of Belief at Scone—in which Alpin was again defeated. Nectan obtained the kingdom and Alpin fled. Drust was slain in a battle with Aengus, and the death of Nectan in 731 left Aengus as occupant of the Pictish throne.²

As will be seen, the above contest was connected with this district, and we state it not only to place a local fact into organic relationship with the general movement, but also because the victory of Aengus had an important bearing upon another ancient Celtic church which since the days of St Cainnech had an intimate connection with Abernethy, and that is St Andrews. Aengus, after conquering Dalriada, evidently desired to connect a new ecclesiastical influence with his reign, and we find that he both introduced a new order of clergy into Kilrymont, who brought with them the relics of St Andrew, and as Nectan consecrated the church of Scone to St Peter, so Aengus dedicated a church at Kilrymont to St

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 286.

² Tighernac.

Andrew.¹ From this time St Peter ceased to be regarded as the patron saint of the kingdom, and St Andrew became Alban's national saint.² It is interesting to observe the results, far-reaching and tenacious, that are often dependent upon historical contingencies.

¹ It is impossible to define the connection between the ancient churches of St Andrews and Abernethy, but Dempster in his 'Menologium Scotorum' preserves an interesting fragment of history: "In Fife Sanctissimarum S. Andreæ reliquiarum in Albionem descensus, quas attulit Regulus Patrensis, ut Tabulæ Abernethæ continebant, *ubi primum deposita fuere.*" If this statement is correct, then the relics of St Andrew were at Abernethy before they were deposited at St Andrews.—Forbes' Kalendars, pp. 211, 212.

² See Dr Skene's 'Intro. to Pictish Chronicle,' p. clix.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "NINE MAIDENS" AND ABERNETHY.

AMID the social and ecclesiastical disorder just described, and about the period when the Columban clergy were driven out of the kingdom by the decree of King Nectan, and the new order of Culdees were taking their place, we have the record of the settlement of the Nine Maidens. It was a time of unrest, and when the Church, through concentration upon secondary and unimportant questions, was failing to discharge its spiritual function, it is interesting to find that women workers faced the duties that were being neglected. It is said of them that they were daughters to St Donevald, a Scot, who yet lived among the Picts in the Glen of Ogilvy, in Glammis parish, near Dundee; that they lived there, as in a hermitage, labouring the ground with their own hands, and eating but once a-day, and then but barley-bread and water; that after their father's death they addressed Garnard, king of the Picts, to give them a place of retirement. It is also said that he gave them a lodging and oratory at Abernethy and some lands, and that, after a life of labour, they were buried at the foot of a large oak-tree much frequented by pilgrims until the Reformation.¹ They flourished in the beginning of the eighth century, and the two eldest were St Mazota and St Fincan. In the Scottish Kalendar

¹ See 'Collections on the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff,' pp. 595, 596.

of Adam King the year of their settlement in Abernethy is given as 712.¹

Bower associated these nine maidens with St Bride: "Garnard Makdompnach founded and built the collegiate church of Abernethy. After that, St Patrick introduced St Brigid with her nine virgins into Scotland, as we have found in a certain chronicle of the church of Abernethy; and he offered to God, to blessed Mary, to blessed Brigid, and to her virgins, all the lands and tithes which the prior and canons hold from ancient times."²

Bower is clearly confusing two facts, considerably separated from each other in time—the one happening in the fifth, the other in the ninth century; the one referring to the gift of land given by King Nectan to St Bridget, contemporary of St Patrick; the other referring to the settlement of the nine maidens at the Holy Oaks of Abernethy. Probably it was the sanctity the parish acquired through its connection with St Bride that attracted these maidens thither, and not unlikely it was the emulation of their lives to imitate her virtues and walk in her footsteps. Goodness ever wins, whatever be the conditions of time and place amid which it appears; and not unlikely from the confused statement of Bower, as well as the outstanding excellence of their lives, there arose at later times a belief in a Scottish St Bride.³ There are miracles attributed to Mazota, one of the maidens; and the superstition that arose around her memory goes far to explain this later belief, and to bring her before us as the one who was honoured with such a name. This settlement of early women workers deepened the sanctity of Abernethy in the minds of religious pilgrims, and down to the time of the Reformation we find that pilgrimages were made to the oak-trees of Abernethy associated with their memory.⁴ There were also wells dedicated to them at Strathmartin in Glamis.

¹ Forbes' *Kalendars*, p. 157.

³ See 'Forbes' *Kalendars*, p. 291.

² Skene's *Fordun*, vol. ii. p. 407.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

The oak-trees disappeared either by natural decay or were destroyed at the Reformation, and the only trace of the existence of the nine maidens that may now be found is at the well near Macduff's Cross called the "Nine Wells." Tradition connects them. Dempster, writing in 1622, preserves also an interesting account of them, which affords a glimpse of their influence and the veneration with which their memory was surrounded. He tells us that their names were written among those of the saints; that their abode at the oak-tree was shown in the memory of our fathers, full of years; that their miracles were engraved on the walls of the ancient oratory at Abernethy, and that these had been lately profaned and abolished "by the heretics."¹

So late as the seventeenth century the kirk-session of Glamis passed an ordinance forbidding maidens going on a pilgrimage to the oak-tree at Abernethy.²

In condemning the superstitions, it is only just to recall what is the sufficient cause to explain them, and that is the splendour of saintly lives. It is moral excellence and a belief in it throughout the centuries that could alone sustain the practice already referred to. We are still under the spell of moral beauty, only we express it in a different form, and Mrs Browning is giving expression to a permanent instinct of human nature when she says of Savonarola—

"I, too, should desire
When men make record, with the flowers they strew,
Upon the self-same pavement overstrewn
To cast my violets with as reverent care,
And prove that all the winters which have snowed
Cannot snow out the scent from stones and air
Of a sincere man's virtues. . . ."

¹ "Abernethæ Donevaldi agricolæ et filiarum novem Sanctis adscriptarum, quarum domicilium quercus, patrum memoria, ostendebatur annosa, et miracula Ecclesiæ vetustissimæ parietinis insculpta, ab hæreticis nuper profanata et abolita."—*Menologium Scoticum*, *Julius* 15.

² See Dr Laing's 'Introduction to the Names of the Breadalbane Estates,' p. 20.

It were foul
To grudge Savonarola and the rest
Their violets : rather pay them quick and fresh !
The emphasis of death makes manifest
The eloquence of action in our flesh :
And those who, living, were but dimly guessed,
When once free from their life's entangled mesh,
Show their full length in graves :

We, who are the seed
Of buried creatures, if we turned and spat
Upon our antecedents, we were vile.
Bring violets rather. If these had not walked
Their furlong, could we hope to walk our mile ?”¹

¹ Casa Guidi Windows. Mrs Browning's Works, vol. iv. pp. 93-95.

CHAPTER XIV.

CULDEES AND SECULAR CLERGY AT ABERNETHY—
BUILDING OF ROUND TOWER.

IT is necessary now to trace the development of the Church after the expulsion of the monks who refused to conform to King Nectan's decree. For about one hundred and fifty years the Columban Church had been the national Church of the country: in 717 it came to an end, or rather we find it transformed by two influences, one of them from without and the other of them from within the Church itself, and these gave it an altogether new aspect. Ancient institutions do not die but become changed, and while the Church itself did not pass away, it assumed a new form and was conditioned by a new government. As the further history of Abernethy is involved in this change, we must now deal with it.

The first of these two influences affected the Church in Scotland through Ireland. The south of that country in 634 conformed to Rome, the north followed in 692, and by the visit of missionaries coming from these parts of Ireland to Scotland, the Scottish system was more and more conformed to that of Rome. Yet the influence from the south was still more permeative, and its leader was Wilfrid of York. We have already seen the intimate connection that existed between the Church in Scotland and the Church in Northumbria, and the effect that the policy of the

latter had on the former. After the king's decree we find secular clergy introduced, with monasticism as a separate institution. The change arose in connection with the Easter and tonsure controversy, and the acceptance of the Roman usage which arose from it. Monasticism was still a feature of the new policy, but it was subordinated to the hierarchy of secular clergy. There was a change, which was in reality a return to the Church of St Ninian.

The history that seems to be preserved in the legends of Bonifacius and Fergusianus is the arrival into Scotland of two bodies of Irish clergy who had conformed to Rome. They were evidently seculars led by two bishops, who sympathised with the newer order of things, and took the place of the Columbans, who had fled. The dedications of the period indicate this, and show the extent to which the country had adopted St Peter as its patron. Among the Northern Picts we have in Aberdeen and Banff, Cultyr, Fivv, and Inverugie; in Moray and Ross, Drumdelgy, Ruthven, Glenbucket, Belty, Inverawen, Duffus, and Rosemarky. Among the Southern Picts, Invergowry, Tealing, Restennot, and Meigle.¹ Nectan himself entered orders, and served either at Abernethy or the church he had built at Scone. We shall see at a later stage of the presence of secular clergy at Abernethy, and it is most probable that at this time they were introduced.

Another influence that affected the Church still more profoundly, and arose from within the Church itself, was an increasing asceticism, that regarded the solitary life as the highest and the best. The anchorites and the secular clergy were opposite poles in religious thought, yet they both agreed in opposing the cenobitical life of the monastery, and living each in separate dwellings, apart from monastic rule. This new order of anchorites represents the third order of the early clergy; they were eremitical

¹ See 'Celtic Scotland,' vol. ii. pp. 227, 233.

as opposed to the first, who were secular, and the second, who were monastic: they arose from within the Columban Church itself; for during its best days every monastery had its *deisert* or place of retirement, and it was regarded as an evidence of saintliness to be able to retire and live apart from the monastic rule. During the turbulent political conditions already indicated, this tendency was deepened and enlarged, until at the beginning of the eighth century it issued in a new order of clergy, called Culdees.

The anchorites are called by ecclesiastical writers *Deicolæ* or God-worshippers, in contrast to *Christicolæ*, a name applied to all Christians in general and to monks in particular. Their ideal was to live a life of prayer, meditation, and self-mortification apart from the society of their fellow-men, and to unite with it benevolence and beneficence. They had evidently an Eastern origin, and serve to show how the Eastern moulded the Western Church: they are first heard of in the deserts of Egypt and Syria, and thence were introduced into the West, and at last are seen in the Churches of Scotland and Ireland. *Ceile De* and *Deicolæ* are correlatives; and *Ceile De* is the name given to the Irish anchorites, just as *Celechrist* corresponds with *Christicolæ*. The *Ceile De* of Ireland exhibit the same characteristics and are animated by the same spirit as the *Deicolæ* of the Continent. They were evidently Eastern mystics in a Western garb, and exhibited the characteristics not of the practical West but of the dreamy East.

In Scotland they appear under the name of Keledei, and for the first time in the territory of the Southern Picts after the expulsion of the Columban clergy. Their introduction is connected with the legend of St Servanus, and there seems to be a nucleus of real history in the part of it which connects him with the Nile. It is an evidence as to the Eastern origin of the order, which in Scotland did not exhibit the extravagances of Simeon Stylites, although it was dominated by the same spirit of individualism and extreme asceticism. The Culdees are first heard of in connec-

tion with the island of St Serf on Lochleven about the beginning of the eighth century, and it is not unlikely that at this period also they were introduced to the neighbouring foundation of Abernethy. The extreme individualism was evidently felt throughout the order as a defect, and in 811 or about that year they were brought under canonical rule in Ireland and Scotland. Wyntoun, Prior of Lochleven, narrates—

“Awcht hundyr wyntyr and fyftene
 Fra God tuk fleysch off Mary schene,
 Leo and Charlys bath were dede,
 And Lowys than in Charlys stede.
 The King off Pechtis Constantyne
 Be Tay than foundyd Dwnkeldyne,
 A place solempne cathedrale,
 Dowyd welle in temporalle,
 The byschope and chanownys thare
 Serwys God and Saynct Colme, seculare,
 Off our byschoprykis, off renowne
 The thryd and reputatyowne.”¹

Mylne tells us that “Constantin placed at Dunkeld religious men who are popularly called Keledei, otherwise *Colidei*—that is, God-worshippers²—but it is to be observed that those whom Mylne names Keledei, Wyntoun calls ‘chanownys seculare.’” The result at which Dr Skene arrives regarding the order is—

That the Culdees originally sprang from that ascetic order who adopted a solitary service of God in an isolated cell as the highest form of religious life, and who were termed *Deicole*; that they then became associated in communities of anchorites, or hermits; that they were clerics and might be called monks, but only in the sense in which anchorites were monks; that they made their appearance in the eastern districts of Scotland at the same time as the secular clergy were introduced, and succeeded the Columban monks who had been driven across the great mountain range of Drumalban, the western frontier of the Pictish kingdom; and that they were finally brought under the canonical rule along with the secular clergy, retaining,

¹ Chron., bk. vi. c. vii.

² Vitæ Episcoporum Dunkeldensium, p. 4.

however, to some extent the nomenclature of the monastery, until at length the name of *Kaledeus* or *Culdee* became almost synonymous with that of secular canon.¹

Dr Campbell, on the other hand, does not accept altogether the view of Dr Skene, and maintains—

The designation *Ceile De* appears to have been of native origin, and neither connected with *Deicola* nor suggested by it. It is, moreover, doubtful if the Irish *Ceile De* were at first solitary anchorites and afterwards made to live together. . . . It is more likely that they were communities from their origin.

Taking *Ceile De* in its primary sense of companionship with God, we may believe that the Culdees were at first ascetics, and probably originated in a reaction from the decay of monastic observance. Their institution may have been in some respects analogous to that of the various orders of medieval monks, who, as they successively arose, sought to reform the corruptions of their times.²

Dr Robertson says: "In considering the name of Culdee there are two things to be kept in view—(1) That it seems to have been less an authoritative title than a loose popular term: 'Clerici a vulgo Culledei nuncupabanatur.' (2) That it was given indiscriminately: 'Culdei Cultores Dei sine discrimine vocitarentur.'" ³

Dr Cunningham says: "We need have no hesitation in identifying these Culdees as the direct descendants of the ancient Columbites. Culdee simply signifies a monk."⁴

It is difficult, from the obscurity of the evidence and the distance of the time, to attain a clear conception regarding the Culdees. They seem to have developed an individualistic type of piety, and when the organic relationship of each to all was neglected, and the abuse which followed from it perceived, to have been at last brought under canonical rule. Probably their

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 276, 277.

² The Church of Scotland, Past and Present. Edited by R. H. Story, D.D. (vol. i. by Dr Campbell). P. 220.

³ See preface to 'Statuta Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ,' p. ccxiv.

⁴ History of the Church of Scotland, vol. i. p. 63.

origin is to be traced to the introduction of Syrian ideas into Western countries; and what Professor Stokes says of the Irish is also true of the similar system in Scotland: "In Gaul, Syrian and Eastern monasticism was flourishing when Christianity passed over to Ireland. In Irish monasticism we should therefore expect to find traces of Syrian and Oriental practices, and such, I believe, we do find in the constitution, the customs, the learning, the art, and the architecture of the early Celtic Church. Some peculiarities of Irish monasticism, for instance, can only be explained by a reference to Syrian ideas and customs."¹

Culdees are found in Scotland at St Andrews, Dunkeld, Dunblane, Rosmarky, Brechin, Dornoch, Lismore, and Iona; also at Abernethy, Lochleven, Monymusk, Muthil, and Monifieth.² The beehive cells in which they lived have all disappeared in Abernethy, but they are still to be seen entire on the Aran Islands off the Galway coast; there they still stand, near the little oratory, such as that of St Enda, and take the visitor back to the life and thought of a long vanished age. The very loneliness of the islands protects them; and those who do not care to undertake the journey can see beautiful photographs of them in Lord Dunraven's volumes on Irish Architecture. Several of the beehive cells are occasionally found in one building.

The witnesses to a charter of the eleventh century exhibit the clergy of Abernethy as consisting of secular clergy, Keledei,³ and the rector of the schools; we will have to deal with this in a later chapter, and we merely mention it at present as it affords an insight into the Church that succeeded the Columban establishment.

It has been pointed out that the legends of Bonifacius and Fergusianus are connected with the introduction of secular clergy and the predominance of Roman influence, and it is pleasant to recall

¹ Ireland and the Celtic Church, p. 174.

² See Reeves' 'Culdees,' pp. 32, 33.

³ "The Culdee houses were originally built of timber: Candida Casa and the church of Abernethy were probably exceptions to the rule."—Prin. Cunningham's Church History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 94.

that the beginning of the eighth century was also associated with missionary zeal and the planting of churches. Scone was dedicated to St Peter, and the church of the neighbouring parish to St Martin. Fergusianus is associated with Glammis, where he lived and taught; and a well and cave there still bear his name. Among the companions of Bonifacius we hear of Benedictus, Servandus, Pensandus, Benevolus, Madianus, and Principuus, bishops and most devout men, and two distinguished virgins, abbesses, Crescentia and Triduana.¹ There are parishes in this district that are still connected with their names, as they were the scenes of their labours and the centres of influence during their lifetime. St Servanus seems to be the second St Serf, and is associated with the near Lochleven; while on the opposite side of the Tay from Abernethy is Kilspindie or the church of Pensandus, and the adjacent St Madoes preserves the name of Madianus.² Thus the place-names vindicate the truth in the ancient traditions.

¹ Chronicle of the Picts and Scots, p. 421.

² See Forbes' 'Kalendars,' p. 282.

CHAPTER XV.

PRIMACY TRANSFERRED TO ABERNETHY FROM DUNKELD.

WE have already seen that the monastery at Iona was divided on the Eastern controversy, and in 717 we find two rival abbots there, one sympathising with the progressive party, the other adhering to the customs of St Columba. In 794 we hear of the appearance of unwelcome visitors in the Danes, who plundered and burnt the monastery.¹ In 801 we hear of the Danes again bringing the church to ruins, and murdering the community of the monastery; and so complete was the devastation, and so hopeless did Iona seem to be free in the future from such attacks, that Cellach, the abbot, removed the seat of government to Kells in Ireland, taking with him the relics of St Columba. Religious feeling, however, centred round the old foundation, and between 814-831 we hear of the rebuilding of the monastery, probably of stone, and of the relics of St Columba being brought back to their original resting-place. But it was not to be free from the attacks of the sea-pirates. Driven by the desire for plunder, and directed to the monasteries on account of the shrines, enriched with costly metals and precious stones that were to be found within them, the Danes for the third time attacked Iona, and Blathmac, the abbot, suffered martyrdom while defending the church, and refusing to tell where the relics were hidden. This happened in 825. In 829 we find Diarmaid returning to Scotland

¹ "Chronicon Hyense," in Appendix to Reeves' Adamnan, pp. 334-338.

with the *minna* of St Columba; and Dr Reeves tells us that the *minna* signifies articles of veneration, such as the crozier, books, or vestments of a saint, upon which oaths used in aftertimes to be administered.¹ So strong were the associations of Iona that, notwithstanding all the imminent dangers, the brethren who had escaped in 825 again assembled on the island; and not unlikely it is in 829 that the little chapel called St Columba's tomb was built.

In 844 a revolution occurred which profoundly affected the course of events and had an epoch-making influence on the history of the Church. Kenneth MacAlpin united the kingdoms of the Scots and Picts under one sceptre, and made Scotland north of the Forth, including the western coast from Kintyre northwards, one kingdom. His mother was of Pictish race, and his father belonged to the royal house of Dalriada: according to the Pictish law of succession, he was heir to the Pictish throne, and on his father's side he was heir to the kingdom of Dalriada. During his reign the Pictish kingdom was merged in a larger one, and gradually the ancient name of Pict fell into disuse, and the name Scot became the predominant one, extending in course of time to every tribe and race from the Tweed and Solway to the Pentland Firth.² We are now at the beginning of larger things, but we have here to do with Kenneth MacAlpin as one whose reign left a lasting influence upon the history of the Church. When a Scottish dynasty was on the Pictish throne there began a new era of influence for the Columban clergy. It is impossible now to measure how far the ecclesiastical movements brought this about, but we know that his accession led to the reintroduction of the Scottish clergy into the eastern districts of the country—into Melrose and Dunbar, which had been "usurped"³ from the Scots, who founded them—and among the places affected by Kenneth MacAlpin's accession was Abernethy.

Kenneth sympathised with the party whose history was involved

¹ Reeves' Adamnan, p. 232.

² Scotland under the Early Kings, vol. i. p. 23.

³ Pictish Chronicle.

in that of his own country, and as he ruled over a united country, he desired to have a united Church, under the government of one bishop. The dangers at Iona, and probably its distance from the central kingdom, made him choose another centre at Dunkeld, where a church had been built by Constantin, king of the Picts. The position of Dunkeld was favourable,¹ as it was in the centre of the kingdom and within easy reach of the other Columban foundations; and in 850 he raised Dunkeld² to the position of primatial see, over his united kingdom, and transferred to it part of the relics of St Columba, which would increase its influence among the early ecclesiastical establishments.

In the year 865 the Annals of Ulster record the death of Tuathal, Abbot of Dunkeld and first Bishop of Fortrenn: "primus episcopus,"—meaning here first in time and not in dignity.³ This statement gives to Tuathal two offices—that of abbot over his own monastery and that of bishop over a united diocese—Fortrenn being the name of the kingdom inhabited by the Southern Picts.

The same year in which the death of Tuathal is recorded, we have an interesting statement made which helps to throw light on this distant period so far as Abernethy is concerned. It is recorded that Cellach, son of Aillel, Abbot of Kildare and Abbot of Iona, died in the kingdom of the Picts.⁴ Nothing shows more

¹ "The Abbat of Dunkeld bore the title which Nectan had given his bishop at Abernethy, and was the Bishop of Fortrenn—the name of the kingdom of the Southern Picts. The title and office were significant of the impending change, which was to strip the abbacy of its old prerogative and prestige, and finally to transfer the ecclesiastical primacy from the abbat to the bishop—the title and the revenues of the abbat being ultimately transferred to a lay holder. The primacy, however, still retained so much of its Celtic character that it was national and not territorial. Its seat was a movable one; and the primate was not the bishop of a diocese, but of a people. The seat was, towards the close of the ninth century, again removed to Abernethy and early in the tenth to St Andrews, from which it was never afterwards shifted."—Professor Story's *Apostolic Ministry in the Scottish Church*, p. 120.

² *Pictish Chronicle*, p. 8.

³ "Tuathal mac Artguoso, primus episcopus Fortren et abbas Duincaillenn dormivit."—*An. Ult.*

⁴ "Ceallach mac Aillelo, abbas Cilledaro et Abbas Ia dormivit in regione Pictorum."—*An. Ult.*

effectively how Iona had lost its early influence than that its abbot should have lived at Kildare. Kildare was dedicated to St Bridget, and Abernethy was from a very early time an affiliated cell of Kildare and dedicated to its saint. When, then, it is stated that the Abbot of Kildare died in the territory of the Picts, it is more than probable that he died at Abernethy, whither he had taken refuge from the attacks of the Danes, who were plundering Leinster from 836-845. His presence at Abernethy would increase its influence, for he brought to it the prestige of one who presided over a monastery in Ireland associated with St Bride, and over Iona, associated with St Columba: he lived in a third, at Abernethy, connected with both these great names; and so it is more than likely that with his companions he lived and taught here, and that his successor was both Abbot of Abernethy and Bishop of Fortrenn. We know for certain that the next abbot of Dunkeld who succeeded Tuathal is not called Bishop of Fortrenn—the title is dropped;¹ and so it seems certain that it is between 865, the year in which the first bishop of Fortrenn died, and the year 908, in which the primacy was transferred to St Andrews, that Abernethy was the metropolitan of the united kingdom formed by Kenneth MacAlpin. Bower, Abbot of Inchcolm, tells us in the ‘*Scotichronicon*,’ written in the fourteenth century, that “in the church of Abernethy there had been three elections of bishops, when there was but one sole bishop in Scotland; and it was then the principal royal and pontifical seat for some time of the whole kingdom of the Picts.”² This did not take

¹ “*Flaithbertach mac Murcertaigh princeps Duincaillden obiit.*”—*An. Ulst.* Reeves’ *Adamnan*, p. 338.

² *Scotichronicon*, bk. iv. c. 12. The only historian who throws any doubt on the statement is Grub, and his objection is arbitrary, as he gives no reason for it (*Eccles. Hist.*, p. 132).

Dr Skene (followed by Bellesheim) says: “Bower is surely here reporting a genuine tradition; and the statement as to the three elections during the time when there was one sole bishop is so specifically made, that it must have been derived from some authentic record.”

—*Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 311.

Lord Saltoun says: “The reverend author of the ‘*Ecclesiastical History of Scot-*

place after the bishopric was transferred to St Andrews, and the facts already indicated seem to place it beyond any reasonable doubt that for thirty-two years Abernethy was the metropolitan of Scotland ;¹ Cellach's influence as Abbot of Kildare and Iona would not unlikely contribute to this position, but its splendid history up to this time justified it. The transference of the primatial see took place in the second year of the reign of Constantin, son of Kenneth MacAlpin. It is an interesting fact to recall, as illustrating the toughness and tenacity of tradition, that an orchard near the present parish church is still called the Bishop's Orchard, and a piece of land contiguous to it, the Bishop's Croft. It seems to be strong topographical evidence in favour of the statement of Bower.

It is to this period most likely that the round tower belongs, and it still stands as a monument of the time when Abernethy had the same place that Iona formerly occupied in the government of the Church, and was the primatial see of the Pictish and Dalriadic kingdoms. It was the work of Irish clergy who took refuge in Abernethy when their own monasteries were in danger of attack by the Danes, and who probably came to this kingdom on account of the protection which they enjoyed from Kenneth MacAlpin and his son Constantin. "It is at this time," says Dr Skene, "that we may place the erection of the round tower there, which could only have been the work of Irish clergy ; and this is the more probable, as it is undoubtedly of an older type than the round tower at Brechin,

land' protests against the claim of Abernethy to the dignity of the primatial seat of the Pictish kingdom, which he says took its rise from a hint in Fordun, amplified and improved by Boece ; and he adds that Forteviot, not Abernethy, was the abode of the Pictish kings.

"Fordun himself, however, says nothing upon the subject ; and the passage in the pages of Bower's '*Scotichronicon*' is assuredly no hint, but a distinct statement of fact, which it seems to refer to a time when there was only one episcopate in Scotia, and the elections of three of the bishops that successively held it took place at Abernethy."—*Frazers of Philorth*, by Lord Saltoun, vol. ii. p. 6.

¹ The bishop of this time was called "*Episcopus Scotiæ totius*." See '*Scotia Sacra*' (manuscripts in Advocates' Library), by R. A. Hay (1700), p. 195.

the date of the building of which can be placed with some degree of certainty late in the succeeding century, and as a round tower had been erected at Kildare, which Dr Petrie places at the close of the preceding century.”¹

Both the Annals of Ireland and Scotland shed some light upon this distant period, and afford historical data in favour of the above position. Turgesius the Dane had planted himself in Ireland and brought the south of it into subjection. In 832 he attacked Armagh and burned it three times in one year; in 841 he banished the bishop and clergy from Armagh, usurped the abbacy, and assumed the full authority and jurisdiction of the north of Ireland. His aim was not only to possess the kingdom, but to bring about a pagan revival and establish heathenism in the oldest centres of Christianity. This was continued till his death in 845, and in that very year Kenneth MacAlpin was restoring the Scottish kingdom, and showing favour to the Christian clergy. As we have already seen, there was the closest connection between Scotland and Ireland about this period, and while there was a peaceful state of affairs in Scotland, there was a turbulent condition in Ireland; for the Annals tell us that in 845 “a fortress was erected by Turgesius for the foreigners, so that they spoiled Connaught and Meath, and burned Cluainmic Nois with its oratories, and Cluainferta Brennain and Tirdaglas and Lothra and numerous cities.”²

It is probably to this cause that we are to assign the appearance of Cellach, Abbot of Kildare and Iona, at Abernethy; and we know that Monenn of Clonfert had a dedication at Inverry, now St Monans, in Fife, probably also belonging to this period, and immediately after his monastery at Clonfert had been destroyed by Turgesius. The condition of things in Ireland gives strong support to the historical truth that is contained in the legend of St Adrian, which Dr Skene assigns to this period. The reference in the

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 309, 310.

² Annals of Ulster, 844; Chron. Scot., 845.

Annals already quoted connects the condition of affairs in Ireland with the incursion of Irish clergy into Scotland, for the name of Monanns or Monenn occurs in the three versions that are preserved to us of St Adrian and his company of clerics as landing in Fife. The Pictish Chronicle gives a version,¹ the Breviary of Aberdeen another, Wyntoun a third; and they all agree in essential details. As this event is intimately connected with the history of Abernethy, we give two of the versions. The Aberdeen Breviary says: "Monanus, born in Pannonia, a province of the region of Hungary, belonged to that company who, with the blessed Adrian, came from the pagan inhabitants of Noricum to the Isle of May, where they were crowned with martyrdom. But, before that the aforesaid company was destroyed by the fury of the Danes, blessed Monanus preached the Gospel to the people on the mainland, and in a place called Inverry in Fyf. There his relics rest. Many miracles of healing were performed there."² Wyntoun connects the event with the reign of Constantin, who transferred the see from Dunkeld to Abernethy:—

"This Constantyne than regnand
 Oure the Scottis in Scotland,
 Saynt Adriane wyth hys cumpany
 Come off the land off Hyrkany,
 And arrywyd into Fyffe,
 Quhare that thai chesyd to led thar lyff.
 At the king than askyd thai
 Leve to preach the Crystyn fay.
 That he grantyd wyth gud will,
 And thaire lykyng to fulfille,
 And leif to duell in to his land,
 Quhare thai couth ches it mayst plesand.
 Than Adriane wyth hys cumpany
 Togydder come tyl Caplawchy.
 Thare sum in to the Ile of May
 Chesyd to byde to thare enday.

¹ P. 423.

² Pars Hyem., f. lix.

And sum of them chesyd be northe
Insteddis sere the Wattyr off Forth.
In Inverry Saynct Monane,
That off that cumpany wes ane,
Chesyd hym sa nere the sé
Till lede hys lyff; thar endyt he.
Hwb, Haldane, and Hyingare
Off Denmark this tym cummyn ware
In Scotland wyth gret multitude,
And wyth thare powere it oure-yhude.
In hethynness all lyvyd thai;
And in dispyte off Crystyn fay
In to the land thai slwe mony,
And put to dede by martyry,
And upon Holy Thursday
Saynt Audriane thai slwe in May
Wyth mony off hys cumpany:
Into that haly Ile thai ly."¹

These statements, read by the light of the Irish Annals, contain a fragment of real history, and point to an incursion of Irish clergy into this district when Abernethy was made the primatial see. The legend about Hungary seems to have been added at the time of Queen Margaret, but the rest is real history, and contains an account of the arrival of those with whose presence in this district the building of the round tower is to be connected. That Adrian and his fellow-missionaries should also have been connected with the island of May is not at all to be wondered at, for the irregular ministrations of the Irish clergy were at this time the subject of Church legislation (*e.g.*, Council Meldense, A.D. 845, Canon 10). Wyntoun, on the other hand, distinctly states that while some of the company lived on the island of May, others penetrated into Fife and taught on the mainland. The present St Monans is due to the missionary activity of this party, and its early church was one of the churches dedicated when the primacy was at Abernethy. The distinct statement of the Chronicles, that several of them

¹ *Cronykil of Scotland*, edited by Dr David Laing, vol. ii. pp. 85, 86.

were martyred by the Danes, not only points to Danish incursions at this period, but gives us the very *raison d'être* of the erection of the round tower at Abernethy.

Dr Skene thinks that the name of one of the three bishops can be found in the dedication of a neighbouring parish: "The church of Lathrisk, now Kettle, was dedicated to St Ethernascus, whose day in the Scotch Calendar is the 22nd December; and we find on the same day in the Irish Calendar Saints Ultan, Tua, and Iotharnaisc, at Claonadh, now Clane, in the county of Kildare, which, too, connects him with the mother church of St Bridget of Kildare."¹ The fact of his being a Scot from Ireland, and not a Pict, would help rather than retard his influence in the Church of Kenneth MacAlpin.²

Another of the three bishops of Abernethy was most likely St Adrian. The neighbouring parishes of Flisk and Lindores were dedicated to him, and commemorate his life in the district, just as Kettle commemorates Ethernascus.³ His name is associated with Macduff's Cross, near this parish, and with an ancient chapel belonging to the church of Abernethy in the parish of Dron, called now "Exmacgirdle." It is a Celtic oratory, still to be seen, with a quaint churchyard around it; *ex* is a corruption of *ecclesia*, meaning church, and the honorific *mo* added to the Celtic name Odran gives a name similar to Macgidrin, which by local usage has been corrupted into Macgirdle. Exmacgirdle means the church of the blessed Adrian, and perpetuates the memory of this early bishop. The Scottish Calendars attribute his martyrdom to the Danes,⁴ and thus cor-

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 311.

² Forbes' Kalendars, p. 334.

³ Ibid., p. 268.

⁴ "The bay of St Andrews and the Frith of Tay, within a mile of which Abernethy is situated, is exactly opposite to the sea that opens an easy communication with Denmark, Sweden, and the west part of Norway."—Travels in Scotland, by the Rev. James Hall, A.M. (1807), vol. i. p. 199.

In the same work he refers to the "Law of Abernethy, where are the vitrified remains of a Danish fortress and the moat or fossé with which it was defended on that side where the hill was accessible."—Ibid., p. 233.

roborate the statement of Wyntoun; but the old legend has another corroboration, for the Pictish Chronicle tells us that in 875, the very year in which Adrian suffered martyrdom, there was a battle between the Scots and the Danes ("Occisi sunt Scoti co Achcochlam. Normanni annum integrum degerunt in Pictavia").¹

875 may be the year, or very near the year, in which the round tower was erected; for we shall see in the next chapter that defence was the primary purpose for which the round towers were raised, and that the time of their appearance in Ireland and Scotland begins with the ninth century.²

While the primacy was at Abernethy there is a benefaction to the Church, attributed by all the Chronicles to King Giric, who reigned from 878 to 889: "This is he who first gave liberty to the Scottish Church, which had been until now under servitude, according to the law and customs of the Picts."³ This is the first time on record that the term "Scottish Church" is used, and it referred to the Church established by his predecessor on the throne, Kenneth MacAlpin. It is a name of which we are all justly proud, for the splendid memories it recalls, and the beneficence to the country with which it is connected; and it is a matter of interest that it was first used when the supreme bishop had his seat in the ancient church of Abernethy. It recalls a time when the Church was ceasing to be tribal and becoming national.

¹ P. 8.

² "It is clear, however, that costly shrines would be the most appropriate prey that Irish art could afford to the barbarian invader; and this reflection makes it easy to understand the fact that, though the work of the smith was more ancient in Ireland than that of the scribe, the examples left to us of the smith's work in ecclesiastical articles belong to a later date than that of the fine illuminated manuscripts. The churches and monasteries were special objects of the Danish attack; none of any considerable importance escaped. The first pagan attack came to an end about 875; and the peace that ensued till 916 appears to have been used as a time of architectural restoration and equipment to meet future troubles with greater powers of defence. . . . Hence round towers."—'Celtic Ireland,' by Sophia Bryant, D.Sc., p. 181.

³ Chron. Picts and Scots, p. 151.

There is a definite meaning also to be attached to the term "under servitude." It signifies that during the many changes that had taken place, burdens had been laid upon the Church by the tribe; that the secular chiefs had brought the Church lands under the same obligations as the tribe lands; that a departure had been made from the early custom of giving with the *termon*, or Church land, right of sanctuary and freedom from rents, or tributes or exactions. During the revolution of 717, when the Columban clergy were expelled by King Nectan, the secular hand was laid firmly upon the Church property, and exactions were made for the support of king, *mormaer*, and *toiseach*. Giric declared the Church's civil independence and the freedom of churchmen from lay service; most likely his proclamation was the same as that of the Synod of Cashel, which declared, in 1172, "that all Church lands and possessions belonging to them be wholly free from exaction on the part of all secular persons, and that neither kings nor *mormaers* nor *toiseachs* are to exact, as has been customary among the Picts, victuals and hospitality in lands belonging to the Church, or presume any longer to extort them by force."¹

A church was dedicated to Giric in the Mearns: it was called the church of St Ciricus, and is now known as St Cyrus, church and parish.

Such are all the annals that can be gathered of the distant time when Abernethy held the primatial see. There were evidently heart-burning questions still in the ecclesiastical and political spheres, and troubles were much deepened by frequent Danish invasions. It seems impossible to disentangle the confused web, and the chief help we have is from Dr Skene. He tells us that immediately after Giric's reign "the kingdom ceased to be called that of Scone and its territory, Cruithentuath, or Pictavia, its Latin equivalent, and now became known as the kingdom of Alban or

¹ Dr Joseph Robertson's *Statuta Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ*, vol. i. pp. xix, xx.

Albania, and we find its kings no longer called kings of the Picts but kings of Alban."¹

The ecclesiastical is evidently again conditioned by the political, for in 908 a great meeting was held on the Moothill of Scone, at which King Constantin and Bishop Cellach "solemnly vow to protect the laws and discipline of the faith and the rights of the churches and the Gospel, equally with the Scots."² What was begun at Abernethy was completed at St Andrews, for in this meeting Cellach took a leading part, and in the same year we find the primacy transferred to St Andrews and Cellach called Bishop of Alban. The causes that led to this are difficult, if not impossible, to define; but had the primacy remained here, the subsequent history of Abernethy would have been more national and its importance to-day far greater.

Its distinctiveness in the past is still marked by a distinctiveness in the present, and that is the possession of a venerable round tower with which we will have to do in the next chapter.³

The Abernethy tower is much older than the Brechin one, and we propose now to investigate the facts, both general and particular, regarding it.

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. i. p. 335.

² Pictish Chron., p. 9.

³ "Five following centuries of her [Celtic Church in the north] have left but two monuments of note, and both bear the impress of the parent country of the Scots. The 'round towers' at Abernethy and Brechin show their Irish origin on their face, and it is in Irish manuscripts that we must look for their history. Dr Petrie is said to have discovered the date of the more northern of the two; and we hear that in the second volume of his 'Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland' he is to prove that the bell-tower of Brechin was built by Irish churchmen about 1010, or a few years after the death of that king, Kenneth MacMalcolm, of whom it is written in the Chronicle of the Picts, 'This is he who gave the great city of Brechin to the Lord.' We have not learned that the builders of Abernethy have been retrieved, but from the beginning this was peculiarly an Irish house."—Scottish Abbeys and Cathedrals, p. 22.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ROUND TOWER OF ABERNETHY AND ITS PARALLEL
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.¹

THE history of round towers has been exhaustively treated by Dr Petrie, Lord Dunraven, Miss Stokes, and Professor George Stokes, and we will arrive at a clear idea regarding them by stating the results attained through the investigations of these four scholars.

Dr Petrie dismisses the theories that they were erected by the Danes, or that they were of Phenician origin. He also gives up as untenable the following theories as to their origin:—

1. That they were fire-temples.
2. That they were used as places from which to proclaim the Druidical festivals.
3. That they were gnomons or astronomical observatories.
4. That they were phallic emblems or Buddhist temples.
5. That they were anchorite towers or stylite columns.
6. That they were penitential prisons.

He gives as their *raison d'être* a threefold purpose:—

- I. That the round towers are of Christian and ecclesiastical origin, and belong to the period between the fifth and thirteenth centuries.

¹ Readers of Sir Walter Scott will recall the reference in the 'Antiquary' (chapter iv.): "'You are in error,' said Arthur; 'it was a copious language, and they [the Picts] were a great and powerful people—built two steeples: one at Brechin, one at Abernethy.'"

II. That they were designed to answer, at least, a twofold use—namely, to serve as belfries, and as keeps or places of strength, in which the sacred utensils, books, relics, and other valuables were deposited, and into which the ecclesiastics, to whom they belonged, could retire for security in cases of sudden predatory attack.

III. That they were probably also used, when occasion required, as beacons and watch-towers.

For the first conclusion he states—

1. That the towers are never found apart from ecclesiastical foundations.
2. That their architectural styles exhibit no features or peculiarities not equally found in the original churches with which they are locally connected, when these remain.
3. That while several of them display Christian emblems, others exhibit a style of architecture universally accredited as of Christian origin.
4. That they all contain features not found in buildings belonging to pagan times.

For the second conclusion, that they were keeps, he states the following reasons :—

1. That their architectural form favours it ; and
2. That documentary evidence proves it.

For the third conclusion, that they were beacons or watch-towers, he emphasises—

1. Historical evidences which render the hypothesis probable ;
and
2. The necessity which must have existed in these early times for such beacons, and the fitness of the round towers to answer such a purpose.¹

Lord Dunraven's investigations have confirmed the views of

¹ See 'The Round Towers and Ancient Architecture of Ireland,' by George Petrie, R.H.A., V.P.R.I.A.

Dr Petrie in so far as he proved them to belong to Christian times, and to have served the threefold use of keeps, belfries, and beacons. He, however, differed from him as to the time of their erection, and believed that the period assigned by Dr Petrie between the sixth and thirteenth centuries was too wide. He arrived at the conclusion that the masonry they exhibit was not to be found in Ireland before the ninth or tenth centuries, and that the decorated Romanesque churches belong to the eleventh and twelfth.¹ Continuing his investigations, he traced their origin through France to Ravenna, and fixed the date of the earliest in Ireland as subsequent to 800 A.D. and the invasion of the Danes.

In various countries [he says in his 'Memorials of Adare'] we can trace the change of belfries, whether in the form of towers or spires, from the simplest types and smallest dimensions until they culminate in the noblest features of Gothic architecture; but it is a most curious circumstance that in the extreme west of Europe towers should be found of a form strongly resembling those at Ravenna and a few other places, and which seem to have received scarcely any modification or development from its earliest appearance, down to the period when the latest were erected—a range of probably from six to seven centuries. This continuity of type is certainly a very striking and uncommon phenomenon. Were it not for the appearance of certain ornamental details, and a better kind of masonry, there is little or no difference between the earliest and most recent of the genuine towers.²

Speaking of Ravenna and Ireland, he says:—

How does it happen that the Irish churches are invariably square-ended, while those of Italy, France, England, and other countries are almost invariably apsidal? from whence is the square end derived? The coincidence is at least singular that the only square-ended early church which I detected in Italy should happen to be at Ravenna—the very place from whence one may, at all events, with some probability conceive that the round towers are derived.³

Miss Stokes, in her charming volume, agrees with the above

¹ See 'Notes on Irish Architecture,' vols. i. and ii.

² Memorials of Adare, p. 229.

³ Ibid., p. 232.

conclusions, but carries the investigations still further. She distinguishes five varieties in the campaniles—

The first and most common, that which stands apart from the church; the second, that which is attached to its side; the third, a smaller tower springing from some portion of the roof; while the fourth and fifth are square—the first bearing a strong resemblance to the early Scottish square towers, such as may be still seen attached to St Diarmid's Church on Inis Cloran in Loch Ree; and the last belonging to a later and more ornate type, such as the towers at the junction of the nave and chancel at Cormac's Chapel, Cashel. . . . The lofty detached tower [Miss Stokes adds] appears to be the oldest type in Ireland, and its singular character of solitude is clearly to be attributed to the fact that the Irish churches before the Cistercian period were invariably low and small, while the Continental buildings reach nearly to the height of the tower beside which they stand.¹

Some of her other conclusions may be thus tabulated: In most cases the stones are laid in horizontal courses; some show string-courses outside marking the storeys inside; all their apertures have inclined sides; the doorways generally face the entrance to the church; the windows are invariably one or two feet off the floors; at the top storey there are generally four windows, so placed as to face the four cardinal points of the compass; internally the towers were divided into six or seven storeys; almost invariably they are to the north-west of the church; their primary use was strength of defence and faithfulness of watch; they were afterwards used as belfries; they are the outcome of the military spirit in Irish monasticism which the Danes helped to keep alive.² Miss Stokes emphasises the communication that existed between the Irish clergy and the Court of Charlemagne, and brings forward as an evidence of it a tapestry at Versailles, where the King of Ireland stands in the row of the princes in amity with Charlemagne, and drawn with the Irish harp by his right side as a mark of distinction, —the emperor himself being of the number.³

¹ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, p. 7.

² Ibid., pp. 56, 106.

³ Ibid., p. 148.

In another interesting work—‘Early Christian Art in Ireland’—Miss Stokes suggests that the round-tower type reached Ireland through Brittany. She regards Dr Petrie as the authority who established that the towers are not pre-Christian ; Lord Dunraven as the investigator who traced the type through France to Ravenna, thereby proving it analogous to that of buildings belonging to a historic period elsewhere ; that they do not date before the ninth century ; that the Decorated Romanesque churches belong to the eleventh and twelfth centuries.¹

Professor George Stokes agrees with the conclusions of Miss Stokes, but traces the development still farther eastward. He regards the work of the Count De Vogüé on Central Syria as one that casts clear light upon the subject, and looks upon Central Asia as the bridge by which Greek and Roman architecture developed into Byzantine, and through Byzantine into Western Europe.² From Antioch Justinian got his architects, under whose direction the church of St Sophia was erected at Constantinople. From Constantinople, where there is the first example of a cupola raised upon pendentives, Byzantine architecture passed westwards into Europe in the sixth century ; it took a strong hold in Gaul, and from Gaul reached Scotland and Ireland. Ravenna has already been spoken of, and Ravenna Dr Stokes regards as the city which received most of Justinian’s munificence. It is in connection with the church of St Vitalis and five other churches of Ravenna that round towers first appear in Europe, “being apparently a modification and combination of the two principles derived from the Syrian Hauran—the principle of the church tower combined with that of the cupola.”³

Ravenna was the link that united the East and West, and became an epoch-making city in architectural development throughout Western Europe. This movement was strengthened

¹ Early Christian Art in Ireland, p. 179.

² Ireland and the Celtic Church, p. 241.

³ Ibid., p. 244.

by an influx of artists and architects, who were driven from the East by an iconoclastic movement within the Greek Church: thither they fled from the persecution of Leo, the Isaurian, and the impoverishment of the East became the enrichment of the West. Charlemagne¹ welcomed them to his Court and encouraged their work: as a result, his reign was characterised by an architectural revival. Professor Stokes points out the interesting fact that these Byzantine architects came to the West in the eighth century, and immediately preceding the period to which Lord Dunraven attributes the appearance of the towers in Ireland. He brings forward a historical proof of this in a manuscript from the library of St Gall's Monastery, which was founded on the Continent by Irish missionaries at an early period: "This document is the original plan drawn out by Eginhard, Charlemagne's chief architect, for the rebuilding of the great church of St Gall. The Abbat Gozpertus, in the year 829, desired to signalise his rule by some great architectural work, and applied to Eginhard, who sent him back this plan, where we see provision made for two round towers at the east end of the apse, while in the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, erected between 796 and 804, under Charlemagne and by the same architect, we find two round towers at the west end of the church."² When to this we add the fact that the Celtic Church was essentially a missionary Church, and instituted centres of religious life so far north as Iceland and so far east as Switzerland; when we recall that in the eighth century pilgrimages to Rome were becoming frequent, and that there was constant communication between the Celtic missionaries and the

¹ "As emperor he always assumed the position of champion of Christendom. To Offa, King of Mercia, he had styled himself 'defensor sanctæ Dei ecclesiæ'; to Pope Leo he writes: 'It is our privilege, according to the favour vouchsafed to us by the divine mercy, to defend by arms in all places the holy Church of Christ from the incursions of pagans and unbelievers without, and within to fortify it by the recognition of the Catholic faith.'"—*Dictionary of Christian Biography*, vol. i. p. 459.

² *Celtic Ireland*, p. 248.

Court of Charlemagne,—we can quite easily understand how the knowledge of the round tower was introduced into Ireland, and how it was adopted there chiefly for purposes of defence.

Such are, briefly stated, the results of the investigations by Dr Petrie, Lord Dunraven, Miss Stokes, and Professor Stokes; and Ravenna stands out as the meeting-place of the East and West, and as the city whence the Celtic missionaries brought a knowledge of the aim and object of the campaniles into Scotland and Ireland. Ravenna is the resting-place of Dante, and so learned an authority as Mr Freeman says of it: "If we seek through the world for a city which is absolutely unique in its character and interest, we shall find it at Ravenna. It is a city in which, as soon as we set foot, we at once find ourselves among the memorials of an age which have left few memorials elsewhere. . . . It is well that there should be one spot from which the monuments of heathen Rome and the monuments of medieval Christendom are alike absent, where every relic breathes of the strange and almost forgotten time which comes between the two. . . . The distinguishing campanile of Ravenna, as of Ireland and East Anglia, is round."¹

The interesting history about the round towers is probably this: They belong to the Christian period; they were erected primarily for defence, and were afterwards used as belfries and beacons; they belong, in Scotland and Ireland, to the ninth century and subsequent centuries; they were introduced from Ravenna, which was the link connecting them with Byzantium and Syria, where, as scholars tell us, was first discovered the use of cupolas and church towers built upon pendentives or hemispheres. Like Celtic monasticism itself, they point to the East as their source and origin, and are thus among the most ancient and interesting of our national monuments. It is not an exaggeration to say that the round tower of Abernethy is the most ancient monument

¹ Historical and Architectural Sketches, pp. 39 and 51.

that stands entire in Scotland to-day. It is interesting from its antiquity, for thirty generations of worshippers have now passed it as they entered the church to worship: it is also interesting when we view it as a landmark in the development of architecture, and pointing to the East as the source of its type.¹

Such are the results of modern research upon this difficult and somewhat obscure subject; and having grasped the general setting, we will now seek to investigate the individual facts that pertain to the tower at Abernethy.

It has been said by Pugin that the history of architecture is the history of the world, and Viollet-le-Duc holds that every architectural form has its reason: both these statements are illustrated by our subject. The round tower was erected at Abernethy for the purpose of defence against the attacks of the Danes, and probably

¹ St Fechin, one of the reputed early builders of the round towers, has a dedication to him at St Vigean, one of the churches in the ancient plebania of Abernethy. The Life of St Fechin, recently translated by the Hon. Emily Lawless, is interesting in many respects, and in this not least of all, that it gives to his towers an Eastern origin, and thus corroborates the position of the authorities already referred to. It tells us that St Fechin, having learned about the towers in his pilgrimages through Armorica, returned home, and finding his fatherland attacked by the "pagan Gall," went to and fro over the whole south of Erin and along both shores of the river Shannon, endeavouring to persuade the chiefs, princes, and abbots to prepare for such attacks by building towers. The Life says: "He besought [the abbots and brethren of the monasteries] to erect tall bell-towers, or *cloictheagh*, of the same kind and description as those which he had learned himself to construct in the land of Armorica, showing them how all the sick of the monastery and all treasures, whether precious metals or manuscripts, could be safely stored in such towers, they being of their own nature so strong that a few men, and those unlearned in the arts of war, might readily defend them against a host.

"Then at certain of the monasteries the abbot and the brethren attended to his words, and having obtained their consent, St Fechin straightway gathered together a store of workmen, and these he taught all that he had learned in the land of Armorica, showing them how to build the towers, and how to set them firm and erect upon their bases. And then for the first time tall *cloictheagh* began to arise in the land, and all who saw them were greatly astonished at their strength and their height, and at the symmetry of their mason-work, although as yet they were less lofty and of a less perfect symmetry than many that were in the after-days built."—See "The Builder of the Round Towers," in the 'Nineteenth Century Review,' No. 217, March 1895.

towards the middle or close of the ninth century.¹ In the last chapter we have seen that Iona had become unsafe from frequent Danish incursions; that under the leadership of Turgesius there had begun a pagan revival in Ireland, and the supreme object of hatred was the Christian Church, which the pagans endeavoured to spoil and rob of its shrines, crosses, crosiers, and other valuable articles adorned with precious metals and stones. When the primatial see was at Abernethy, the relics of St Columba were preserved within its church along with the other valuables which an ancient and rich foundation such as this possessed. Wyntoun, in fact, explicitly tells us that Bishop Adrian and many of his companions were martyred by the Danes during the very period when the venerable structure was erected.² It seems to be quite certain that they always went where ancient foundations were, and the object of their mission everywhere was to restore the pagan divinities to power, and to crush to the dust the Christian shrines. We cannot doubt that their spoliation would lead to defence, and that the round tower was erected with that purpose in view.

About 900, according to the Pictish Chronicle, there was a struggle between the men of Fortrenn and the Danes in Strathearn, and that this struggle took place near the old church here there can be no doubt, as the men of Strathearn are said to have attacked the Danes, carrying the crosier of St Columba at their head as a standard and invoking his aid.³ There is also the tradition of a

¹ "There can be no doubt that this peculiar form of round tower owes its existence to the presence of the Irish clergy, who returned to Scotland in the ninth century."—*The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 175.

² See last chapter.

³ "It was an ancient custom of the Christian people of Erin and Alba to carry such relics into battle with them. The custom survived in Ireland till 1497, and there is evidence that it survived in Scotland till after the battle of Bannockburn." The most treasured of these were the Psalter and crosier of St Columba (Dr Anderson's '*Scotland in Early Christian Times*,' p. 241).

battle at Luncarty between the same combatants.¹ The tower was erected as a strong keep into which the relics and valuables were placed: the doorway was considerably above ground, entrance to which was obtained by a ladder, and when the valuables were safely stored, the ladder was withdrawn and the entrance guarded, probably by iron external and internal doors. Attacks in those days were quick; the weapons of warfare were the bow and arrow; and it cannot be doubted that for passive defence and active resistance alike, the tower was admirably suited for its purpose. It stands to-day as a monument of a great Scottish struggle between Paganism and Christianity, and its circular form was admirably suited for the purpose of defence, and at the same time harmonised with the form of the ancient Scottish broch, which, as we have seen in an early chapter, was well known to the people. This new development in architecture arose to meet the new need for defence; everything about the tower speaks of this as its primary object, and the apertures sloping externally downwards were evidently constructed for pushing missiles downwards through the wall. Sir Walter Scott said: "These towers might possibly have been contrived for the temporary retreat of the priest, and the means of protecting the holy things from desecration on the occasion of alarm, which in those uncertain times suddenly happened and as suddenly passed away."²

That the round tower, however, was used for another purpose seems certain from the name given to it by the Annalists—*cloic-theagh* or bell-keep. The small Celtic bells were deposited in it,

¹ Thus referred to by Thomas Carlyle: "Beyond doubt a powerful Norse-pirate armament dropped anchor at the Red Head, to the alarm of peaceable mortals about that time. It was thought and hoped to be on its way for England, but visibly hung on for several days, deliberating (as was thought) whether they would do this poorer coast the honour to land on it before going farther. Did land, and vigorously plunder and burn, south-westward as far as Perth; laid siege to Perth, but brought out King Kenneth on them, and produced that 'battle of Luncarty,' which still dwells in vague memory among the Scots."—*Kings of Norway*, chap. v. p. 21.

² *Quarterly Review*, vol. xii. 1829.

and after the twelfth century, when bells of greater size and more penetrating tone were invented, the bell, that it might be heard afar, was placed at the summit of the tower. It is not unlikely that this was the origin of the four windows facing the four cardinal points of the compass at the summit of the Abernethy tower. The architecture of these is pronounced to be that of the twelfth or thirteenth century, and the present summit is unquestionably an addition to the early building. Probably its object was to raise the height of the tower, so as to give the sound of the bells greater freedom to travel far and wide. Miss Margaret Stokes says: "Bell-ringing in the tenth century appears to have been practised in two different ways, one being the mere use of the signal-bell of the hand-bell-ringer; the other, the art of the carillon-player, which implied a knowledge of music and the exercise of the player's talent on a series of bells tuned to different notes, which could form an harmonious accompaniment to the harp or rote."¹

That bells were known at an early period in the history of the Celtic Church seems certain. There are five bells carved on the capital in the ancient church of St George De Bocherville; five also are seen in a manuscript psalter of the British Museum, where King David is represented as playing on them with hammer in each hand; in the manuscript of St Blaise, belonging to the period between 800 and 900, five bells are suspended in a row, and are being struck by a player with a hammer.² These examples afford proof of the second purpose for which the towers were admirably adapted; and that they fulfilled that purpose well is still known at Abernethy, for the bell by which the worshippers are summoned to church³ is in

¹ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, p. 80.

² Ibid., pp. 78-81.

³ The Rev. David Duncan, minister of the parish, writing in 1844 his account of the parish for the 'Statistical Account of Scotland,' says: "It [the tower] had been occupied from time immemorial as a belfry for ecclesiastical purposes; and a right to use it for civil purposes, connected with the burgh, has been claimed and exercised within certain limits."

the tower, and its sound is heard over the country far and near. Yet it is to be noted, as Miss Stokes observes, that the Annalists do not mention the word *cloiccthech* or *cloicctheagh* before 950, and the primary defensive purpose of the round towers is strengthened by the additional information that they are either found on the coast or the river-valleys infested by the enemy.¹

A third purpose, efficiently discharged by these structures, was the giving of signals to the district far and near. Says Dr Petrie: "The pillar-tower as a defensive hold, taking into account the period that produced it, may fairly pass for one of the completest inventions that can well be imagined. Although the abbey and its dependencies blazed around, the tower disregarded the fury of the flames: its extreme height, its isolated position and diminutive doorway, elevated so many feet above the ground, placed it beyond the reach of the destroyer. The signal once made announced the approach of a foe, by those who kept watch on the top; the alarm spread instantaneously, not only among the inmates of the cloister, but the inhabitants were roused to arms in the country many miles around."²

While the tower served such a purpose in time of war, it served a constant and beneficent purpose in time of peace, and that was in the darkness of the night to guide by its kindly light the pilgrim and the wayfarer to the monastery, which regarded hospitality as an essential part of its life and work. A beacon-light would always be kept burning on its summit, and when the clear light of stars or moon was not to be enjoyed, would welcome the missionary home from his toil, guide the pilgrim to the shrine for prayer, and speak to the weary of rest, and to the hungry of the beneficence and philanthropy which in those simpler but purer days the monastery existed to maintain. In days when might was right, it would also speak to the persecuted of the Church-girth and

¹ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, pp. 104 and 106.

² Eccles. Architecture of Ireland, p. 373.

privilege of sanctuary, where he could claim Church privilege, and be free from the tyranny of the oppressor.

"O mystic tower ! I never gaze on thee,
Altho' since childhood's scarce remember'd spring
Thou wert to me a most familiar thing,
Without an awe, and not from wonder free.

Oh, structure strange and column-like and high !
Thy lofty brow is lifted towards the sky,
And all things human that around thee lie,
Thou, lonely watcher, here, ere they began,
Saw'st as they rose around thee."¹

The round tower of Abernethy stands partly within and partly without the present churchyard wall, and to the north-west of the entrance to the ancient church, which was, alas ! demolished at the beginning of the present century. From a representation of it in Grose's '*Antiquities*' (vol. i.), we can see that it was situated in the centre of the present churchyard, and was placed north and south. It thus presented the same anomaly as the church of St Benen,—island of Aran, above Kill-Enda Bay,—which also was a departure from the early usage of placing the church east and west.² The south gable of this ancient church³ was not far distant from the tower, which was situated to the north-west of it. The doorway of the tower was evidently near the entrance to the church, and was apparently so arranged for the immediate safety of the relics and valuables in time of attack. Everything about the present structure points to a remote antiquity, and the internal stones are more weather-worn than the external facing.

The tower is somewhat wanting in graceful symmetry of outline, yet the entasis is very slight. From the sills of the attic windows there is an appearance of outward inclination.⁴ We

¹ Sonnet by the Rev. James Leckey.

² Dunraven's *Notes on Irish Architecture*, vol. i. p. 70.

³ This church may have been one of several, as at Clonmacnois.

⁴ See '*Trans.*' vol. iii. p. 306.

thus find wanting the delicate tapering which is so striking in the Irish towers, that present the appearance of more artistic design than the Abernethy one can lay claim to.

There is no representation or symbolism of any kind to be found at the door or windows; everything speaks of it as being more ancient than the companion tower at Brechin. The height of the tower is 73 feet; the thickness of the wall at the side of the doorway is 3 feet 7 inches; at the cope it varies from 2 feet 8 inches to 2 feet 10 inches: the internal diameter at the base on the churchyard level is 8 feet 2 inches; at the top 8 feet 8 inches; the circumference at the base is 48 feet 3 inches. The masonry of the tower is of ashlar, in horizontal courses varying from 12 to 16 inches in height; the stones are chiselled to the curve both inside and outside.¹

For about twelve courses from the ground the stone is a hard grey sandstone, which bears little trace of the action of the weather; the rest of the edifice is of a bright buff-coloured freestone, much weather-worn at the joints. Probably the upper part is a later addition or restoration of the eleventh or twelfth century. External evidence seems to point to the little lower windows facing the west, south, and east respectively as belonging to the original structure: a learned authority has pronounced the upper four windows to belong to the eleventh or early part of the twelfth century.² The stones of which the tower is built are said by those

¹ See 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,' article by R. Brash, vol. iii. pp. 303-319.

² Such is the view taken by the most recent authorities. "In this tower we find features which belong both to the Celtic and Norman styles of building. The circular form of the tower and the disposition of its parts, the door raised some feet above the ground, the small windows in the lower storeys, the four large windows in the top storey, and the inclining jambs of door and windows, all point to the Irish origin of the design; while the distinctively Norman character of the details of the four upper windows, and the regular coursing and dressing of the masonry, show the influence of the Continental style of the twelfth century."—*The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, by David MacGibbon and Thomas Ross, vol. i. p. 178.

competent to pronounce judgment upon such matters to be foreign to the immediate neighbourhood. They are only to be found on the Lomond Hills, several miles distant to the south, or at Cupar, several miles distant to the north-east. If they were brought such a distance, we have a strong evidence of the painstaking devotion with which these early builders did their work, and an evidence of their desire to procure the most enduring material.

The door faces the north, and access is to be had to it from within the churchyard. The present unsightly iron cage that surrounds it is a recent addition. The door has converging jambs and a semicircular head; the arch is scooped out of one stone, and evidently marks the early period of transition from the entablature to the arch type in architecture. The stones above it are evidently so arranged as to relieve the arch from the weight of the superimposed structure.

The width of the door at the sill is 2 feet 8 inches, at spring of arch 2 feet 6 inches; the height to springing is 6 feet 7 inches, to soffit 7 feet 11 inches.

The present circular wooden stair is a very recent structure: originally there were internal platforms, reached from each other by ladders. The internal strings belonging to such are still quite visible, although much rounded by the storms of centuries. The first string-course is 9 inches below the doorway-sill; $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep on face with 5 inches in projection. The first storey is 14 feet 6 inches in height; the second 11 feet 10 inches; the third 13 feet 1 inch; the fourth 12 feet 2 inches; the fifth 10 feet 9 inches; thence to the coping 4 feet 8 inches.¹ The fifth storey is lighted by the four later windows, directed respectively to the four cardinal points of the compass; the fourth storey is lighted by an ope facing the east; the third by an ope facing the west; the second by an ope facing the south: these with the doorway

¹ I am indebted for the above accurate measurements to Provost Garrick, Abernethy.

evidently all belong to the primitive part of the structure, and are of rude construction.

It is an interesting fact that the tower of Abernethy, the chapel of St Regulus at St Andrews, and the ancient cross of Mugdrum are all constructed from one and the same kind of stone, and it has been suggested that some quarry midway between Abernethy and St Andrews was the quarter whence it was derived.¹

The round tower of Abernethy is the most ancient in Scotland, where they were never so frequent as they were in Ireland. There is one also at Brechin belonging to a later period: there exist others in ruins at Durness and Egilsha. Of these two the learned writer of 'Early Christian Architecture in Ireland' says:—

The church of Durness was divided into nave and chancel, the latter being vaulted. A doorway opened from the chancel on a spiral staircase, leading to a small apartment between the towers on the second storey, from which was the entrance to the second tower. Tradition states that bells were hung in these towers, but is silent as to the name or date of the builder or founder of the church.²

The church of St Magnus in Egilsha is dedicated to, and was in all probability founded by, St Magnus, who first visited this island in the year 1098. . . . The church has a belfry attached to it, . . . has a strong resemblance to St Kevin's church at Glendalough, . . . has no regularly built radiating chancel-arch, but a little barrel-vaulted chancel, roofed with stone externally.³

These towers are seen at their best when they stand alone. The houses of the village and the walls that are contiguous to the tower of Abernethy rob it largely of its impressiveness. Says Mr Ferguson: "In almost every instance the tower stands alone and erect beside the ruins of an ancient but deserted church and among the mouldering tombstones of a neglected or dese-

¹ Pre-Reformation Churches in Fife and Lothians, by J. R. Walker.

² Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, p. 72.

³ Ibid., p. 73.

crated graveyard. In a town or amid the busy haunts of men they would lose half their charm; situated as they are, they are among the most interesting of the antiquities of Europe.”¹

Although the tower at Abernethy suffers the disadvantage of being surrounded by buildings, it yet stands before us almost weird with its associations, and as a great stone-book in which the men of a long-vanished past have recorded their aims. It has resisted the storms of ten centuries, and among other things declares to those of to-day the permanence of solid work. Most likely in former centuries it was crowned with a campanile; that has disappeared, and only the solidity of the workmanship could have enabled the tower itself to survive the neglect of centuries.

Gordon in his ‘*Itinerarium Septentrionale*’ (Lond., 1727) writes: “I went directly to Abernethy, the ancient capital of the Pictish nation, to see if I could find any traces of the Picts hereabouts, but could discover nothing except a stately hollow pillar without a staircase, so that when I entered within and looked upward, I could scarce forbear imagining myself at the bottom of a deep-drawn well.” Fortunately the neglect of former centuries has been repaired by the present Earl of Home: a spiral stair has been introduced, by which visitors can easily find their way to the platform top, where an extensive view of a lovely district can be had; the hoary walls have likewise been carefully pointed, and the tower promises well of being able to survive the storms of many future centuries.² Let it do so,

¹ History of Architecture, vol. ii. p. 239.

² Bellesheim has the following paragraph upon the tower of Abernethy: “Like the tower of Brechin, it rises close to the ancient church. Its height is about seventy-two feet, and the stones of which it is built are of circular shape and twelve or sixteen inches high. Up to the twelfth course the builder has employed grey sandstone, which has almost entirely resisted the weather; while the remainder is built of a buff-coloured freestone, now much worn away, especially at the joints. The thickness of the wall at the base is three feet and a-half, gradually tapering to about two feet seven inches. This difference, of course, is inconsiderable in proportion to the height of the tower, which consequently

and ever speak more eloquently the lessons it is so well fitted to teach.

appears somewhat heavy, and lacks the gracefulness of outline which distinguishes the tower of Brechin. The entrance is towards the north, and is placed some two and a-half feet above the ground. The stones surrounding the doorway are not perfectly upright, but, as at Brechin, converge slightly towards the top of the entrance. The interior is divided into six stages or sections."—Vol. ii. pp. 353, 354. "The date of their erection was a time of continuous peril both to Ireland and Scotland from the irruptions of the Northmen."—*Ibid.*, p. 356.

CHAPTER XVII.

ST CADROË—ESTABLISHMENT OF CANONICAL RULE.

IN 921, after the primatial see had been removed to St Andrews, the Culdees came under canonical rule. The Pictish Chronicle narrates that Maenach, Cele De, or the Culdee, came across the sea from the west,—that is, from Ireland,—to establish the ordinances of Erinn. This can only mean that the Culdees in Scotland, who must have lived irregularly from the extreme individualism of the system, were now brought under the same canonical rule that the Culdees in Ireland had accepted a century before. This is important, as it sheds light upon an early charter relating to Abernethy that will be considered in a following chapter (xix.)

In connection with the movement we have the narrative of St Cadroë. Cadroë was born in 900, was educated at Armagh, and in 921 returned to his uncle, Beanus, who was afterwards venerated as a saint at Fowlis-Wester in Strathearn. We are told, "He scatters the seeds of wisdom throughout the whole of Scotland; for though the Scots have had many teachers, they have not had many fathers. He here trained them in the knowledge of the arts, whence, because he instructed many with his lips, he had no associates; for, from the time of his arrival, none of the wise men had crossed the sea, but still remained in Ireland. The old man rejoiced to possess the youth, and had not his equal in anything which he tried."

His work in Scotland continued until 940, when he beheld in a vision three caves with a bright shore in the distance, each of which he must pass, for they indicate respectively the abandonment of property, the relinquishment of country, and the acceptance of the monastic life. He thinks he is thus guided to leave his native country and go on a foreign mission: he resolves to do so. He prepares himself for it. There flowed near his residence a large river, close to which, as it happened, was the trunk of a certain tree. Thither he retires at midnight, and removing his garments, enters the stream, and holding by the tree that he may not be carried away by the current, he recites the Psalms from the 118th to the 123rd. Constantine, the king, as well as the people, beg him not to quit the country, but in vain. He starts on his pilgrimage, enters the Monastery of St Bridget to pray, when the people, "noble and rustic"¹ coming from far and near, fill the church. Maclodarius, the abbot, and the king persuade the people to let him go, for the latter had been entreating him to remain, by placing the relics of St Bride before him. He departs to the land of the Cumbrians, visits Leeds, York, London, Winchester; embarks for the Continent, where he enters a Benedictine monastery, is abbot of two others in succession, and ends his days at Metz in his seventieth year and the thirtieth year of his missionary wanderings.²

The "large river" here mentioned is the Earn; Beanus is St

¹ Pictish Chronicle.

² See 'Chron. of Picts and Scots,' pp. 106-116; and Forbes' 'Kalendars,' p. 293. "He [St Cadroë] constitutes thus the last of many links in a golden chain of mutual intercourse and influence binding together the early Churches of Scotland and Ireland. . . . After he had thus spent the prime of his manhood, a dream of his uncle, St Bean, in which Cadroë appeared about to pass through three successive caves on his way to a bright shore beyond, was interpreted to mean his destination to a life of self-improvement and monastic discipline, along with missionary exile, as the pathway to heavenly rest and reward. Cadroë is 'not disobedient to the heavenly vision.' In vain the people assemble in crowds to remonstrate against his departure. In vain his royal kinsman, King Constantine, adds his dissuasion to the popular voice. In vain the church of St Bride at

Bean, to whom was dedicated the church of Kinkell in Strathearn; the Monastery of St Bridget is the church of Abernethy; Macloedarius is its abbot.

We mention these facts in this chapter because of their intimate connection with the ancient church of Abernethy, and because they afford us information about an early teacher who was identified with a movement that affected the constitution of the Culdee Church, and who was the last of the long line of missionaries that came from Ireland to Scotland.

Cadroë exhibits both the asceticism and the missionary zeal of this early period. These may be pronounced extravagant,¹ but in doing so let us not cease to admire the earnestness that pervaded and sustained them. The saint was always beyond his time, although he sometimes revealed the superstitions of his time; and in those distant times earnestness united with such daring may have been powerful to help forward better things, and impress a rude people. Cadroë appears amid the mists of an early period as an earnest Christian missionary.

Abernethy, whither Cadroë had retired to pray for guidance, is filled with a congregation who mingle tears with prayers.

‘I hear the voice you cannot hear,
Which says I must not stay :
I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away.’”

—Prof. Cowan’s *Scottish Church in Christendom*, pp. 24, 25.

¹ Says Dr Cunningham: “No religion but one of miracle, magic, and mystery could have survived the medieval ignorance and superstition.”—See ‘*The Growth of the Church*,’ p. 262.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TREATY OF ABERNETHY, BETWEEN MALCOLM CANMORE
AND WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, 1072.

WYNTOUN, in the 'Cronykil of Scotland,' tells us—

"A thowsand and sevynty yhere,
Malcolme past wytht hys powere
Tylle the Ile off Haly-Eland
The land befor hym dystroyand.
A thowsand twa and sevynty yhere,
Wyllame Bastard wyth hys powere
In Scotland come, and wastyd syne,
And rade all throwcht till Abbyrnethyne."¹

Malcolm Canmore reigned from 1057 to 1093 over a kingdom the southern boundary of which was limited by the Forth. He was very friendly to the kingdom of the Angles, and to keep them from Danish and Norman pressure, as well as probably to make friends of the Saxons against a common foe, he carried war into the kingdom of Northumbria, which was at the time in a most unsettled condition. The Saxon Chronicle tells us that in 1067—that is, after the battle of Hastings, when the Saxons were defeated by the Norman invaders—"Eadgar child went out [from Northumberland] with his mother Agatha and his two sisters Margaret and Christina, Maerleswegen, and many good men with them, and came to Scotland under the protection of King Malcolm, and he received

¹ Dr Laing's edition, vol. ii. p. 163.

them all. . . . Then King Malcolm began to yearn after his sister Margaret to wife, but he and all his men long refused, and she herself also declined, and said that she would have nor him nor any one if the heavenly clemency would grant that she in maidenhood might propitiate the mighty Lord with corporal heart in this short life in pure continence. The king earnestly urged her brother until he answered yea, and indeed he durst not otherwise because they were come into his power.”¹

This marriage, which took place between the king of the Scots and the Saxon princess in 1068, had an epoch-making influence on the destiny of the Scottish Church; but it evidently had a strong political influence in the south, and led to a friendly relationship between the Saxons and the Scots. The former needed the help of the latter in resisting the Norman invasion; and Simeon of Durham tells us that “Malcolm had five times wasted the province of Northumbria with a savage devastation”:² two of them were in connection with the claims of Eadgar, his brother-in-law, who was the heir to the Saxon throne, and Malcolm’s policy seems to have been to add Northumbria to his own kingdom, and recognise Eadgar as his vicegerent in the government of it.

William the Conqueror had little power beyond the Humber, but in 1069 he invaded Northumbria and conquered it.³ The Danes withdrew, and the only one that stood between him and complete supremacy was Eadgar the Ætheling, who had taken refuge with his nobility at the Scottish Court, and were received and supported by Malcolm. The Scottish king had also identified himself with Eadgar’s cause by marriage with his sister and the invasions he had made into Northumbria. King William the Norman resolved to establish a definite relationship with Malcolm and impress him with his power; and in 1072, the Saxon Chronicle narrates, “he led a naval force and a land force to Scotland, and lay

¹ See ‘Celtic Scotland,’ vol. i. p. 414.

² De Gest. Reg. ad an. 1093.

³ See Green’s ‘Short History of the English People,’ p. 83.

about that land with ships on the seaside, and with his land force went in over the Ford." He thus entered Scotland proper by the ford over the Forth at Stirling with a view of capturing Scone, the capital of the country; his fleet evidently met his army at Abernethy, and we are told "that King Malcolm came and made peace with King William, and gave hostages and became his man, and the king went home with all his force." Florence of Worcester says, "Malcolm, King of Scots, met him in a place called Abernethiei."

Eadgar fled to Flanders, and an understanding seems to have been made between the two kings; for we find that after 1072 Malcolm did not concentrate his attention upon Northumbria, but upon the reformation of his own kingdom. This is the earliest connection between a Scottish king and one of the Norman line of English kings, but what were the exact terms of the treaty of Abernethy, by which Malcolm gave William his son Duncan as a hostage and "became his man," it is impossible fully to say. We know, however, that Malcolm received a grant of certain manors in England, the promise of a yearly payment of twelve merks of gold, on condition of homage. Dr Robertson says: "The homage of Malcolm would appear to have been *simple*, not *liege*, for he never seems to have been called upon to perform any feudal service; whilst his subsequent repudiation of the demands of Rufus shows that the homage was not rendered for the kingdom of Scotland, but was simply the feudal recognition of his subsidy. In short, the meeting appears to have resulted in a compromise, William endeavouring to secure the peace of his northern borders by what in the present age would take the form of a pension or subsidy, then conferred as a feudal grant, for which Malcolm performed homage, giving up his son as a hostage for his faithful observance of the treaty."¹

¹ Scotland under Her Early Kings, vol. i. p. 137, vol. ii. p. 401. Wyntoun and the Saxon Chronicles are at one in identifying Abernethy as the place where the treaty was

Long before 1072 there had been a migration of a Saxon population into Fife and northwards,¹ and we have already seen that there were Danish incursions, at first bent on plunder and afterwards on settlement: this entrance of William the Conqueror also left its influence behind, and prepared the way for the development of feudal Scotland. This was a period not only of political change but of ethnological transition, which must have added much to the rich diversity of later centuries.

made between the two kings. Dr Robertson has the following criticism of a negative critic. He says: "Lord Hailes, vol. i. p. 17, thinks it improbable that Abernethy on the Tay can be the place intended, from its lying out of William's probable route. He appears, however, to have forgotten that all the early invaders of Scotland who combined a fleet with their land force—and none else were successful—must have held their course *along the coast*, or their fleet would have been useless. Abernethy, according to Ailred, was in Scotia (Twysden, p. 340) or beyond the Forth, and it was exactly because William had succeeded in penetrating into the heart of the real kingdom of Scotland that Malcolm came to terms."—Scotland under Her Early Kings, vol. i. p. 136.

¹ See Hill Burton's 'History,' vol. i. p. 405.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN ANCIENT CHARTER RELATING TO ABERNETHY CHURCH
AND SCHOOL, *CIRCA* 1100 A.D.

AN ancient charter, giving a grant of land to the Keledei of the neighbouring monastery of Lochleven, affords a glimpse into the state of the church at Abernethy between 1093 and 1107. It runs thus:—

Ethelradus, a man of venerated memory, son of Malcolm king of Scotia, abbot of Dunkeld and likewise earl of Fyf, gave to God the Omnipotent and St Servanus, and the Keledei of the island of Lochleven, with the utmost reverence and honour and with every freedom, and without any exaction or demand whatever in the world, from bishop, king, or earl, Admore, with its rightful boundaries and divisions; and, seeing that this possession was given him by his parents, while he was yet in boyhood, he with the more affection and love immolates it to God and St Servanus and those men serving God there; and this collation and donation, when first made, was confirmed by the two brothers of Ethelradus, David and Alexander, in the presence of several men worthy of credit, such as Constantin, earl of Fyf, a most discreet man, and Nesse; and Cormac, son of Macbeath, and Malnethte, son of Beollan, priests of Abernethy; and Mallebride, another priest; and Thuadhel and Augustinus, a priest, who were Keledei; and Berbeadh, rector of the schools of Abernethy; and before the rest of the whole community of Abernethy then living there; and before God the Omnipotent and all saints.¹

This is an interesting document, and gives a clear idea of the

¹ Regist. Prior. S. Andreae, p. 115.

Church at the close of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century.

1. It shows that the Keledei of Lochleven still continued to be the same community of hermits as they were at the time of St Servanus—a community which had either resisted, or through their isolation had been unaffected by, the changes that had come upon the Church.

2. It gives us an instance of the lay abbot of Dunkeld making a grant of land, in his own name and by his own authority, to the Keledei of Lochleven, Ardmore being part of the land belonging to Dunkeld, of which he was nominally abbot, and which he claimed as private property through his office.

3. This grant was confirmed at Abernethy in the presence of the "whole community," but more specific information is given about the condition of the church in the names of the witnesses. They consist—

(a) Of secular priests, two of whom are named—Cormac and Malnethte.

(b) Of a body of Keledei, three of whom are named, two of them being priests—Thuadhel with Augustinus and Mallebride, priests.

(c) Of the rector of the schools—Berbeadh.

We have here a description of the church at Abernethy during this early period, from which we see that the church was served by clergy partly secular, partly eremitical, and partly scholastic. There were on the one hand, secular priests, who lived apart from the monastic rule, who did not recognise celibacy as binding upon them, and when we add to this the facts that the right to the abbacy was representative in the family but elective in the individual, and that during the political chaos the ecclesiastical régime had become degenerate, we can understand the appearance of a lay abbot, who acquired the rich Church possessions and appointed priests to discharge for him the ecclesiastical duties. In

course of time the distinction became still wider, until, as at Abernethy, the abbot appears as a great secular lord, dominant over, yet existent apart from, the ecclesiastical foundation. Of this we will hear more in the next chapter, but in the meantime it must be recalled that it was not until the second great Council of Lateran, held in 1139, that the marriage of the clergy was pronounced illegal, and the effect of this law was not to restore the property to the Church, but to stereotype great secular foundations which families had acquired through an early Church connection.

On the other hand, the charter tells us of the existence of Keledei, who were probably living under the canonical rule,¹ in connection with the introduction of which St Cadroë played a prominent part. They seem to have combined the distinctive side of their system side by side with ecclesiastical discipline and order. It is of these anchorites that existed in Abernethy and elsewhere that Turgot writes in his *Life of Queen Margaret*: "There were many in the kingdom of the Scots who, in different places, enclosed, lived in the flesh, but not according to the flesh, in great straitness of life, and even on earth lived the life of angels. In them the queen did her best to live and venerate Christ, and frequently to visit them with her prayers and converse, and to commend herself to their prayers; and, as she could not induce them to accept any earthly gift from her, she earnestly requested them to deign to prescribe for her some work of charity or of mercy. Whatever was their desire she devoutly fulfilled, either in recovering the poor from their poverty or relieving the afflicted from the miseries which oppressed them."²

They evidently represented the extreme asceticism of the early

¹ Bower has the following statement: "Postquam illuc introduxit beatus Patricius Sanctam Brigidam sicut in quadam chronica ecclesiæ de Abernethy reperimus, cum suis novem virginibus in Scotiam et obtulit Deo et beatæ Mariæ Brigidæ et virginibus suis omnes terras et decimas *quas prior et canonici habent ex antiquo*."—*Scotichron.*, bk. iv. c. 12.

² Chapter ix.

Celtic Church, while the secular clergy represented those who were more associated with the worship and daily beneficence of the Church.

The charter has a further interest, however, in bringing before us the educational branch of the Church's work. We have already said that this was a strong feature in the Columban Church, and evidently it was not superseded by the many vicissitudes through which the Church passed in the intervening centuries. Berbeadh is distinctly mentioned as rector of the schools at Abernethy.¹

We know that the schools of Ireland were famous for their learning in the early centuries, and were resorted to by scholars, while the sons of wealthy Europeans were sent to them for education. The schools of Iona and Whithorn were not behind them, and it is more than probable that the early school connected with this foundation would wield the same influence, and be resorted to for purposes of education from far and near. A most important functionary in these schools was the *scribhnidh* or scribe, who appears at the end of the seventh century: he not only transcribed the Scriptures and kept the records of the monastery, but was also a teacher and public lecturer. At this period there arose a rich hagiological literature, which along with the Scriptures was read to the people both for instruction and for the quickening of the religious life.

The manuscripts that are still preserved are very beautiful, and the "Gospels of Lindisfarne" show that in the art of decoration

¹ (a) "The school of Abernethy was renowned in very early times."—Bellesheim's 'History of the Catholic Church in Scotland,' vol. ii. p. 327.

(b) "The country between the Forth, the Tay, and the central ridge of the Grampian range was the real heart and centre of Alban. Here were the royal capitals of Scone and Forteviot: here the bishoprics of St Andrews and Dunkeld and Abernethy, once also a capital and bishopric, still an abbacy, and apparently the seat of the learning of the age."—Dr Robertson's 'Scotland under Her Early Kings,' vol. i. p. 232.

(c) Strathearn, Ayr, and Ireland, each claims John Scotus Erigena as a son (cf. Cunningham's 'Growth of the Church,' p. 235). If Strathearn has the honour, it is more than likely he was educated at the ancient Celtic school of Abernethy.

these scribes had attained a high degree of perfection before the close of the seventh century. Dr Joseph Anderson thus describes their work :—

The Celtic manuscripts have the initial letters written of gigantic size. Their decorations are not of the nature of illustrations of the subject, but simple ornamentation elaborated to a degree which renders it bewildering. But the analysis of its nature reduces it to a few simple elements, the use of dots in different coloured inks, the employment of simple interlaced work in panels of different colours, the use of composite or interlaced work made up of the bodies and limbs of impossible animals or of human figures, intertwined and contorted in an utterly unnatural manner, a peculiar adaptation of the double spiral, by which a diapered pattern of contiguous circles or spirals of unequal sizes is produced, the use of a step-like pattern, a Z-shaped pattern, a fret, and occasionally a rosette or other combination of simple lines, straight or curve.¹

These early Celtic schools introduced a knowledge of the alphabet among the people, and not unlikely the knowledge of writing. Says Dr Skene :—

The earliest lives of St Patrick certainly attribute to him the introduction of the written alphabet. . . . Of the two alphabets known to have existed among the Irish, the one now called the Irish alphabet, and supposed to be peculiar to the Irish language, is, as Dr Todd well remarks, nothing more than the Roman alphabet, which was used over all Europe in the fifth and some following centuries. The other, called the Ogham, which is mainly confined to inscriptions upon stone monuments, though it occasionally appears in MSS., is of the same character as the Scandinavian Runes, and has now also been clearly shown to have a post-Christian origin.²

The scribes were important officials in the early Celtic monastery of Abernethy, but the "rector," who is mentioned in the charter of the twelfth century, is evidently the *ferleiginn*, lector or man of learning, whose presence was more intimately connected with education. The *ferleiginn* appears as a new functionary, who

¹ Scotland in Early Christian Times, First Series, pp. 157, 158.

² Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 448, 449.

gradually superseded the scribe in the ninth century.¹ His office seems to have been directed towards the training of scolocs, who were theological students, preparing themselves for the service of the Church. His appearance in Abernethy seems to tell us that besides being a church for the immediate district, it had many churches dependent on it, which it supplied with officiating clergy. The term "schools" is distinctly used, and it is not a straining of the meaning to say that they were of two kinds—one for the efficient training of the children belonging to the district, the other a kind of college for the education of priests.

Unfortunately we do not have an extant list of the books belonging to the ancient library here, but a list of the books in the near monastery of St Serf's at Lochleven in 1150 A.D. gives us an idea of those that would most likely be in the affiliated monastery of Abernethy.

The books [says Mr Haliburton], mainly on moral and religious subjects, were twenty in number—exactly what Chaucer's clerk of Oxenford wished to have at his bed's head. Here is the authoritative list of the books of Lochleven: Liber Pastoralis, L. Gradualis, Missalis, L. Origeni, Liber Sententiarum, Tres Quaterniones de Sacramentis, cum Bibliotice (sc. Patrum), Lectionarius, Acta Apostolorum, Textus Evangelorum, Tres Libri Solomonis (with a gloss to the Song of Solomon), Collectio Sententiarum, Expositio super Genesim, Exceptiones Ecclesiasticarum Regularum, and what seems to have been an explanatory dictionary—probably of Latin terms. The Pastoral book seems to have been a definition and description of the duties of priors, &c.; the Gradualis has been explained as a book of Responses; the Missal, a kind of Mass-book; the Liber Origeni may have contained the peculiar and debatable doctrines of Origen; and the Exceptiones, &c., appears to have been a species of Dispensations or Indulgences. It is interesting to know that while only three books of the Old Testament, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, with a commentary on Genesis, formed part of the library of Lochleven, as many as five represented the New Testament, and that these were the books essential to a correct and full knowledge of the rise and

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 444.

early history of Christianity—viz., the four versions of “The Gospel” and the Acts of the Apostles.¹

¹ Furth in Field, p. 160. Andrew Wyntoun, Prior of St Serf's, Lochleven, wrote his ‘Orygynale Cronykil’ about the middle of the fourteenth century. Says Bellesheim: “The style of diction and easy flow of Wyntoun’s verse are not excelled even by Barbour himself, although in poetical genius he is, of course, far inferior to that writer. His work has been not inaptly compared to the ancient castles or picturesque monasteries of the age in which he lived. ‘What spectator of taste,’ asks Tytler, ‘has not often preferred the ancient castle with all its romantic disproportions, to the symmetrical beauty of the modern edifice? And where is the student who is an enthusiast in the history and antiquities of his country, who would not rather read the quaint and homely descriptions of the Prior of Lochleven than the pages of modern writers, where vigour, freshness, and originality are so often sacrificed to insipid elegance?’”—History of the Catholic Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 340.

CHAPTER XX.

EXTINCTION OF THE CELTIC CHURCH AT ABERNETHY—
HOSTILITY OF QUEEN MARGARET.

THE Celtic Church had now reached its palmy days, and as an institution was affected by two causes—internal decay and external changes: the former was represented by the encroachment of the secular element, the latter by the foundation of an episcopal and parochial form of Church government. We have already seen how the Church property passed into the hands of lay abbots, who retained the title of ecclesiastics as a means of acquiring their possessions, which they made hereditary in their family, while they delegated the duties of the office to nominees of their own. The Celtic Church was a wealthy Church, but its work was crippled by the growing predominance of laymen, whose representatives founded great secular lordships upon the old religious foundations. The influence from within was strengthened by another from without, which, while different from it, yet agreed with it in having the same end as its ultimate object. This was the policy begun by Queen Margaret, and followed by her sons Eadgar, Alexander, and David I.: it consisted in abolishing the tribal idea, in which the polity of the Celtic Church was rooted, and substituting the parochial system with an episcopal superintendence over it; in introducing the religious orders of the Roman churches, and planting rich abbeys near the old Celtic monasteries, with a

view of counteracting their influence, and transferring to them the veneration of the people; in bringing the Culdees under canonical rule, terminating their existence as secular clergy, and merging them in the newer order of Canons Regular. When to these causes we add the frequent incursions of the Danes, we can understand how formidable were the forces arrayed against the ancient Church, and how far-reaching were the changes made.

We have already considered the rise of the lay abbot to a position of power; immediately we will see this illustrated in Abernethy. In the meantime we have to do with the movement inaugurated by Queen Margaret, of whom Dr Skene has thus written: "There is perhaps no more beautiful character recorded in history than that of Margaret. For purity of motives, for an earnest desire to benefit the people among whom her lot was cast, for a deep sense of religion and personal piety, for the unselfish performance of whatever duty lay before her, and for entire self-abnegation, she is unsurpassed, and the chroniclers of the time all bear testimony to her exalted character."¹ Her desire was to bring the Church in Scotland into harmony with the Roman organisation; to correct abuses and irregularities; to lessen local autonomy in Church organisation and government by increasing the power of the great central authority. For these ends she strove nobly, discussing the matters personally in the Church Councils, and carrying through the reforms by her own personal magnetism against the stubbornness of conservative clerics. Her attention was directed to bringing about greater strictness in the marriage laws, and in the observance of the Lord's Day; to correcting the abuses that had arisen in connection with the forty days' fast, and insisting against the Celtic practice "of not receiving on the Festival of Easter the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, according to the usage of the Holy and Apostolic Church."² Queen Margaret

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. p. 344.

² Turgot's Vita Margaritæ.

had at heart the desire to purify the Celtic Church of its abuses and irregularities, and to bring it into harmony with the Catholic Church south of the Tweed, in which she had been trained, and to which she had been accustomed from her earliest days. Her position as queen, and the devotion which Malcolm had for her, enabled her to bring about reformation, and what she began in her lifetime was carried out in spirit by her sons, Eadgar, Alexander, and David, who succeeded to the throne.¹

Alexander's first ecclesiastical act was to appoint Turgot, Prior of Durham, to the bishopric of St Andrews; to create the sees of Moray and Dunkeld, and to introduce into Scone the Canons Regular of St Augustine, or the Black Canons, as they were called in Scotland. David restored the diocese of Glasgow, and established the bishoprics of Ross, Aberdeen, Caithness, Dunblane, Brechin, and Argyll or Lismore: he left also monasteries of the Cluniac, Cistercian, and Tyronian orders (who were Benedictines), and the Arovensian, Præmonstratensian, and Balvacensian (who were Canons Regular from Aroise, Prémontré, and Beauvais). His whole policy was to suppress the Keledei, and establish in their place Canons Regular, if they would not accept the alternative of coming under the rule of the new orders. Like his mother, he was determined to have the Church of Scotland in harmony with the Church of St Augustine, and so his policy became the culmination of a historical development that had been slowly making its way, and overcoming resistance either naturally or by force.

The history of Abernethy is closely identified with the two dioceses of Dunblane and Brechin,²—both, according to Dr Skene,

¹ "We have reason to believe," says Bishop Forbes, "that during this period all the fierce and bloody features existed in Scotland that are found in the Welsh and Irish Christianity, in which we see a strange combination of faith and immorality, devotion and bloodthirsty outrage, a deep sense of the supernatural often made concrete by the veneration of relics, and a fierce untamed violence."—*Kalendar Notes*, p. 388.

² "The monasteries of Columban origin which David I. found existing at the time of his reforms were either utilised as they stood by the Roman Church, or gave place to more

founded by David I. Dr Reeves,¹ on the other hand, thinks it more likely that the diocese of Dunblane was founded by Earl Gilbert, and made conterminous with the earldom of Strathearn. Dr Cosmo Innes is of the same opinion, and finds authority for his view in the statement of Fordun, that Earl Gilbert divided his earldom into three equal parts—one part of which he gave to the Bishop of Dunblane; another to St John the Evangelist and the canons of Inchaffray; the third part he reserved for himself in his earldom.² Whether Dunblane was founded by the earl or the king, it is certain that the diocese of Brechin was the creation of King David, and that both were formed from the ancient bishopric of Abernethy, in so far as its churches were not absorbed by the see of St Andrews, which succeeded it. The ecclesiastical divisions generally followed the civil divisions, and we have already seen that the civil jurisdiction of Abernethy extended over Kincardineshire and Forfarshire as well as Fortrenn, and it is just in these districts that the jurisdiction of the sees of Brechin and Dunblane lay: both were evidently formed from the old Pictish bishopric of Abernethy. The influence of the patron saint is seen in both: there is Panbride in the diocese of Brechin, and Kilbride in the diocese of Dunblane; and although Abernethy ecclesiastically ought in later times, from its situation, to have been in the diocese of St Andrews, we find it included in that of Dunblane. This ancient place was so associated with old ecclesiastical controversies, and the spirit of the time so strong against old Celtic establishments, and so much in favour of the Roman *régime*, that it was both deprived of its ancient possessions and its ecclesiastical jurisdiction. At Dunblane and Brechin we have the introduction of a cathedral staff of canons with a dean and other functionaries, and immediately after 1144,

stately piles which lasted till the Reformation. Among these the most notable were Abernethy, Dunblane, Dunkeld, Brechin, Culross, Dunfermline, Scone, St Serf's, and St Andrews."—*History of Early Scottish Education*, by John Edgar, M.A., p. 17.

¹ *Culdees of the British Islands*, p. 46.

² *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, p. 205.

when the Keledei were suppressed at Lochleven and Monymusk, we find the same done at Abernethy, and the monastic order of Rome introduced in their place.

By the help of charters that belong to this period we are able to acquire a knowledge of the process. We have just seen how it was deprived of its diocesan jurisdiction; by the help of the following charters we see how it was despoiled of its possessions. King William the Lion followed the policy of his predecessors, and during his reign the great Abbey of Arbroath was founded in 1173 for the Benedictine order of Tyron, and dedicated to St Mary and St Thomas the Martyr. Among the churches granted to this abbey, we find that King William gives "the church of Abyrnythy with its chapels, lands, tithes, and oblations, its common pasturage, and all other privileges belonging to it";¹ and we find that in the same year, 1173, his brother David, Earl of Huntingdon, founded a monastery at Lindores, three miles distant from the church of Abernethy, which was also richly endowed from the ancient possessions of Abernethy. In the charter of this foundation we get another glimpse of the churches belonging to the Pictish bishopric along with others, for we find mentioned the churches of "Dunde, Fintrith, and Inverurin, with the chapel of Munkegin: the churches of Durnach, Prame, Radmuriel, Inchemabanin, Culsamuel, and Kelalcmund, with the chapels, lands, and teinds of the said churches, and all their pertinents, to the proper use and sustenance of the said monks."² The neighbouring Abbey of Lindores acquired several of the early churches originally belonging to the Columban monastery here, and the spoliation of William the Lion must have left Abernethy in a very weakened condition.

¹ Reg. Vet. de Aberbrothoc, vol. i. p. 25. The witnesses to this charter were: Hugh, the Chancellor; A. Abbot of Dunfermylne; Earl Duncan, the Justiciar; Earl Gilbert; Richard, the Prebend, "clerico meo"; Radulph and Walter, "capellanis meis"; W. Cumyn, W. de Haya, Radulph Rufus, Robert de Berkeley, Roger de Mortimar, Merlesswain, and Herbert, the Marischal. The charter was granted at Perth (*ibid.*)

² Dr Laing's Lindores Abbey, p. 468.

There is another charter, however, which is very interesting as exhibiting the power the lay abbot had acquired, and represents him as giving still further gifts to the Abbey of St Thomas at Arbroath. It belongs to the period between 1189-1199, and in it Laurence, son of Orm de Abernethy, conveys to the church and monks of Arbroath his whole right "in the advowson of the church of Abernethy, with its pertinents—that is, the chapel of Dron, the chapel of Dunbulc, with the chapel of Erollyn, and the lands of Belache and Petenlouer, and with the half of all the tithes which belonged to him and his heirs, the other half belonging to the Keledei, and with all the tithes of the territory of Abernethy, and its proper rights, with the exception of those tithes which are appropriated to the churches of Flisk and Cultrain,¹ and the tithes from his lordship of Abernythy which the Keledei of Abernythy have, and which properly belong to him—viz., those of Mukedrum and Kerpul and Balehyrewelle and Ballecolly and Invernythy on the east side of the river."² In confirming this charter, William names the granter of it Abbot of Abernethy, and it is most interesting as giving us a glimpse into the condition of the church at this period. Here is the abbot of this ancient house of Culdees appearing as the lord of the lordship or manor of Abernethy, and granting tithes out of his property of Abernethy, and asserting it to be the possession of him and his heirs. Here is Laurence, son of Orm, granting to Arbroath his privileges as abbot, retaining

¹ With regard to two of the churches granted to Arbroath in this charter, the Rev. Dr Campbell, in his interesting book on 'Balmerino and its Abbey,' says: "The mention of the churches of Flisk and Cultra, as included in the territory of Abernethy, confirm the view previously suggested that the ancient parish of Balmerino (in which Naughton was not included), and we may now add that of Flisk, formed part of the endowments of the Culdees of Abernethy, having been in all probability Christianised by them at a very early period" (p. 29). The lands thus belonging to the church of Abernethy were both valuable and extensive, as the parish of Balmerino is twelve miles farther down the Tay, and this is only what belonged to it on the east side.

² Reg. Vet. de Aberbrothoc, vol. i. p. 26.

the land, and becoming a great secular lord, founding the baronial house of Abernethy.

"These charter evidences," says Dr Cosmo Innes, "help out the obscurer indications in our older chronicles, of a race of church nobles, hereditary heads of religious houses, and taking rank among the highest of lay magnates. When we read that the ancient dynasty of our kings (before the Wars of the Succession) sprang from the marriage of Bethoe, a daughter of Malcolm II., with Crinan, abbot of the Columbite family of Dunkeld—that Ethelred, a son of Malcolm Canmore, Abbot of Dunkeld, was also Earl of Fife, our best historians have evaded the embarrassment by questioning the authority of the chroniclers; and it has not hitherto been suspected that there were proofs of an old house of Culdees, even surviving St David's Church revolution, having its hereditary abbot, and styling himself and acting as lord of the abbey territory."¹ The charter is also interesting in so far as it confirms the truth of the original grant of land to the church by King Nectan, and preserves the names of churches which seem to have been founded by the ancient Columban monks, and were retained as baptismal or dependent churches—viz., Dron, Errol, Dunbog.

In the following century (between 1211-1214) we find the record of a dispute between the abbot and monks of Arbroath, and the prior and Keledei of Abernethy about tithes which the latter declared belonged to the church of Abernethy.² It was brought before the Bishop of Dunblane for judgment, and he settled it in favour of the Abbey of Arbroath, and against the Keledei of Abernethy.

Such is the last we hear of the Keledei in this place, and they were either suppressed or conformed to the new orders, for in 1272 Bower speaks of Canons Regular as being in Abernethy.³

Thus terminates the interesting history of the Celtic Church in

¹ Sketches of Early Scottish History, pp. 149, 150.

² Reg. Vet. de Aberbrothoc, pp. 146-148.

³ Scotichron., bk. x. c. 33.

Abernethy. What Dr Skene says of this early period in general, applies to this old establishment in particular: "The old Celtic Church came to an end, leaving no vestiges behind it save here and there the roofless walls of what had once been a church, and the numerous old burying-grounds, to the use of which the people still cling with tenacity, and where occasionally an ancient Celtic cross tells of its former state. All else has disappeared; and the only records we have of their history are the names of the saints by whom they were founded preserved in old calendars, the fountains near the old churches bearing their names, the village fairs of immemorial antiquity held on their day, and here and there a few families holding a small portion of land, as hereditary custodiers of the pastoral staff or other relic of the reputed founder of the church, with some small remains of its jurisdiction."¹

With all its irregularities, with its strong local autonomy and its weak centralisation, the Celtic Church began in a great missionary movement, and as long as it was inspired by the missionary spirit, was an earnest Church; but the very richness of its possessions chilled the ardour of its devotion, and made it the prey of secular lords, who from its vast possessions became great Church lords. Nevertheless it did not pass away until it had made Scotland nominally Christian, until it had destroyed paganism as a creed, although many pagan superstitions survived and continued to survive for centuries. Its saints won the affections of the people, and the miracles attributed to them sustained their sense of wonder, quickened their romantic spirit, and inflamed their devotion. The Celtic Church did much for their religious life, but it also bettered their social condition, and was a witness for justice in the days when might was right. A scholar well able to give an opinion on such a matter does not hesitate to aver, that while we cannot know much of the intellectual condition of the country, yet, from a material

¹ Celtic Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 417, 418.

point of view, Scotland was more prosperous at the death of Alexander III. than at any other period of her history down to 1707.¹ All this speaks most favourably of the work done by the Celtic Church; and however obscure much of its history may be, we cannot look back upon it without seeing that it was the pioneer in the religious and social development of Scotland, and that it began the work which a later age was to carry more towards perfection.

The influence of the times, as well as its own internal decay, finally merged it in a larger organisation. A new people, of Anglican and Norman descent, were spreading throughout the land, and with them, new ideas and institutions. They were warlike, and possessed a better civilisation; the Celtic race was either conquered or accepted service under them; the Celtic institutions likewise passed away before the advancing feudalism. The monks of St Benedict or St Augustine took the place of the Culdees;² the

¹ Cosmo Innes's *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, p. 158.

² The Scottish Kalendars reflect the spirit of the times, and a study of them in their chronological order shows the tendency to eliminate the names of the old Celtic saints and to substitute in their place those of the Catholic Church. Thus the Kalendar of the Cistercian house of Culross, attributed by Sir James Balfour to 1305, but probably belonging to a later time in the fourteenth century, is, according to Bishop Forbes, "a witness to the complete Anglicanisation of the Scottish Church which took place after the epoch of St Margaret. It will be seen how very few of the Celtic saints occur among its entries, and therefore we must believe that, while they retained a veneration for the ancient founder of the place, who was joined to the blessed Virgin in the dedication of the church, the Cistercians of Culross very much ignored what had gone before, and cut themselves off in sentiment from the old historical Church of Scotland. . . . The Anglicanisation of the Scottish Church came through the Cistercians and canons of St Augustine. . . ."

"The monks of Culross were Cistercians, but it was the same among the Austin canons. In the *Ritual of Holyrood* we find that the Kalendar is purely English, the only Scottish saints being Monan, Baldred, Duthac, Kessog, Constantine—all in March; and St Ninian in a later hand. In an interesting martyrology which follows the Kalendars no mention is made of them."—Introduction to *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, pp. xxi and xxii.

We find David, his son Henry, and his whole Court at Abernethy ('Scotland in the Middle Ages,' p. 120), and he helped radically to finish what Queen Margaret had begun. Abernethy bears witness to the effacement of the Celtic Church, and reflects as much as the Kalendars the changed condition of things. The Austin canons, introduced from Inchaffray, were true to the newer policy; they most effectually succeeded here in following it out.

possessions of the Celtic monastery passed into the hands of the new order, with a pittance reserved for the poor parish priest who discharged the duties of the cure. Abernethy was one of the thirty-three parishes given by William the Lion to the Abbey of St Thomas at Arbroath. Its titles were absorbed by the richer foundation, and the very possibility of it regaining its prestige was taken away. Monachism was now in the ascendant, yet if the Celtic Church erred by preserving too strong local autonomy, not less did the monastic system err by producing an exaggerated form of centralisation with local autonomy almost eliminated. Well does the subsequent history of the Scottish Church vindicate the weighty words of an authority already referred to:—

The monasteries became, and indeed continued for some ages, the centres and sources of religion and letters, the schools of civil life in a rough time, the teachers of industry and the arts of peace among men whose sloth used to be aroused only by the sound of arms. But even the advantages conferred by them were of a small account, in contrast with the mischief of humbling the parish clergy. The little village church, preserving the name of some early teacher of the faith—with its modest parsonage where were wont to be found the consolations of religion, refuge, and help for the needy, encouragement for all on the road to heaven—was left in the hands of a stipendiary vicar,—an underling of the great monastery, ground down to the lowest stipend that would support life, whose little soul was buried in its cloister, or showing its little activity only in disputing about his needful support with his masters at the abbey, while his “hungry sheep looked up and were not fed.” The Church which ignorantly, or for its own purposes, sanctioned that misappropriation, paid in time the full penalty. When the storm came the secular clergy were degraded and powerless; the regulars, eating the bread of the parish minister, themselves idle or secularised, could not be defended.¹

Still with this evil, which seemed incidental to its very existence, the monastery of the middle ages was a necessary step in the national progress. Although it became ultimately bad in Scotland, it originated in good. In its best days the monastery was true to

¹ Cosmo Innes's *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, p. 19.

the spirit of the adage, "Clastrum sine literatura vivi hominis est sepultura." The monastery was in its pure days the defence of the weak against the strong; it was the home of the very highest intellect of the age; it helped to create the nation; it was the advocate of liberty in an age of feudalism, and educated the very spirit among the people which destroyed it on account of its later corruption: it helped to civilise and Christianise the people of Scotland. The monastery built up the *imperium* among the people, and because ultimately it maintained the impossible position of being an *imperium in imperio*, it had to pass away. Says Charles Kingsley: "Paradoxical as it may seem, in these monasteries was preserved the sacred fire of modern liberty, through those feudal ages when all the outside world was doing its best to trample it out. Remember as a single instance that in the abbot's lodgings at Bury St Edmunds, the Magna Charta was drawn out before being presented to John at Runnymede."¹

The monk was a civiliser, and his monastery was open both to the sons of the great and the humble. It gave a scope both to piety and ability, and through its influence the humblest might become great, provided he had the necessary ability to fill such a position. To be an abbot in a monastery like Arbroath was to have the opportunity of exercising an influence that might be productive of good to the large district around and to the country in general. If the monastic system had not become tainted with avarice, if it could have kept free from the evils incidental to celibacy, the monastery might have suffered less savagely when "its hour was come."

As the subsequent history of Abernethy after the reign of William the Lion is to a considerable extent wrapt up in the history of the Abbeys of Arbroath and Inchaffray, it will be necessary to state briefly the outstanding features of their history.

¹ The Roman and the Teuton, p. 265.

CHAPTER XXI.

ABBEYS OF ARBROATH AND INCHAFFRAY IN RELATION
TO ABERNETHY.

THE reign of William is characterised by the rise of free burghs in Scotland, and by the foundation of the great Abbey of Arbroath—endowed and dedicated to Thomas à Becket, who was slain in 1170 and canonised in 1173. The king may have had a personal acquaintance with the brave archbishop, or may have had a wish to extol one who had the courage to protect the rights of the Church against the encroachments of the State, and in the very endeavour to do so had humbled the English king. Whatever may have been the motive, the fact remains that the king was both the founder and benefactor of the abbey, and that it was dedicated to a saint belonging to the newer party in the Scottish Church. The patronage and the tithes of thirty-three churches were given to the chapter of the abbey, with teinds, salmon-fishings, the custody of “the *Brechbenneck*,” a licence of timber in the king’s forests, and a loft in each of the king’s residences and burghs. Among its many early benefactors, beside the king, were the Earls of Angus, Marjory, Countess of Buchan, the De Berkeleys, Thomas de Lundyn, and Robert de Lundres.

Arbroath Abbey was begun in 1178 and completed in 1233. It was burnt in 1272 and 1380. Its history is connected with many

of the stirring events in Scottish history, and its abbot, in virtue of his wealth, followers, and power, was by far the most outstanding individual in the shire.

The completed buildings must have been characterised by stately splendour: in the middle of last century Dr Johnson said of its ruins, "He should scarcely have regretted his journey, had it afforded nothing more than the sight of Aberbrothick."

The chartulary of the abbey affords a territorial history of the province, and so rich is it in reference to families that Dr Cosmo Innes says, "It may yet come to pass that it will be held a proof of gentry in Angus and Mearns to be able to point to an ancestor in the Chartulary of Arbroath."¹

The abbey was toll-free: it was protected against the local impositions which beset all the forms of merchandise. It was custom-free, and passed its exports of wool, salmon, tallow, hides, by virtue of its own cocket. The privilege which the abbot most valued was the tenure of all his lands in free regality—that is, with sovereign power over all his people, and the unlimited emoluments of criminal jurisdiction.

The abbey had a bailie of the regality or "justiciar chamberlain and bailie"; also a mair and coroner, who were the executors of the law within the bounds of the regality. There was the office of judex, deemster, or dempster in the abbot's court, which passed with the lands of Caraldston into the family of the Earl of Crawford.² The gentry of the shire and district did not deem it ignoble to hold their lands as vassals of the abbey.

William the Lion chose the abbey as his place of sepulture, and was buried before the high altar on the 4th of the Ides of December 1214, in the presence of his successor and a large gathering of the nobles of Scotland.

The abbey was held by the Tyronenses—an order founded in

¹ Preface to *Reg. Nig.*, p. xxviii.

² Cosmo Innes's *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, pp. 160, 161.

1109 at Tyron, near Chartres, by St Bernard, Abbot of St Cyprian's in Poitou.

We have, in the former chapter, considered the interesting charters of William the Lion and the Lord of Abernethy granting to the Monastery of Arbroath the patronage of the church, and the possession of certain lands and tithes in the church territory. Abernethy was thus until the Reformation a vicarage or chaplainry of Arbroath, whence the ordained priest was sent for the discharge of the parochial duties. The Abbot of Arbroath was a prebendary of Dunblane for Abernethy from 1240,—Abernethy being within the diocese of Dunblane.¹

Abernethy was also connected with the Abbey of Inchaffray; indeed there seems to be much in favour of the view that the priory of the Culdees became a cell or priory of Inchaffray,² while the parish church was served by a vicar from Arbroath. In the charters of the Lord of Abernethy it is stated that with certain lands and chapels he grants half of all the tithes which belong to him and his heirs, the *other half* belonging to the Keledei. These Keledei lingered until 1272, when their priory became one of Canons Regular or Austin canons, brought most probably from Inchaffray.³ Charters are very obscure on the point, but there seems no reason to doubt that the priory was a cell of the Abbey of Inchaffray, which was founded in 1200 by Gilbert, Earl of Strathearn, and dedicated to God, St Mary, and St John Evangelist. Canons Regular were introduced to Inchaffray from Scone. The Abernethies of Abernethy were related by blood to the Celtic Earls of Strathearn, and there is charter evidence about the prior and the canons of Abernethy in 1394:⁴ it seems very

¹ History of the Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 334.

² "Abernethy was afterwards a priory of Canons Regular of St Augustine, who were taken from Inchaffray in 1273."—See 'Pocock's Tours in Scotland' (Scottish History Society Publications), p. 261.

³ Keith's Catalogue of Scottish Bishops, p. 393; supported by Rankin and Walcott.

⁴ G. S. Register, 1580-1593, pp. 313, 964.

probable that the sense of kinship and the sympathy with Celtic customs would bring Inchaffray and Abernethy very close together, and that when the Culdees felt the spirit of the times to be against the very existence of their order, they would prefer to cast in their lot with Inchaffray in their own diocese rather than with Arbroath. We have also Bower's¹ statement that in 1272 Canons Regular or Augustinian canons were at Abernethy:² a similar order was at Inchaffray, while those at Arbroath were of the Tyronenses.

The same order of things seems to have existed here as in the ancient parish of Monymusk. The church and priory of the thirteenth century would take the place of the church and monastery of the Celtic Church.³ As at Monymusk, so at Abernethy, not a vestige of the ancient priory now remains: no record exists to tell us how it was destroyed. Not unlikely, as at Monymusk, it was destroyed about the Reformation period. The prior was the vicegerent of the abbot, and was the head of a smaller house: when the monastery was placed under a bishop, or regarded as a cell of a greater monastery, it was called a priory. Such seems to have been the relation of the prior and priory here to the Abbot and Monastery of Inchaffray.

While the Canons Regular were brought originally from Inchaffray, the Priory of Abernethy would recruit itself afterwards from its own scolocs,—for an important part of the work of the priory, as of the monastery, was the education of the young, both for the ordinary work of life and especially for Church service. The order of the Canons Regular of St Augustine was founded by Ives of Chartres and others in the eleventh century, and resulted from the failure of the attempts to force the canonical rule on the

¹ Scotichron., bk. x. c. 33.

² "The Augustinian, Benedictine, and Cistercian monks were the first agriculturists on a large scale in Fife."—Fife and Kinross, by Sheriff Mackay, p. 190.

³ Church and Priory of Monymusk, by the Rev. W. M. Macpherson, p. 68.

clergy of the cathedral and cathedral churches. These canons differed but slightly from the monks, and resembled them in the renunciation of property. The order was introduced into England very early in the twelfth century;¹ thence they were brought to Scotland.²

Bishop Keith thus describes their dress: "All these canons wore a white robe, with a rochet (*rochelum*) of fine linen above their gown, a surplice in the church (*superpellicium*), and an almuce (*lamutium*), formerly on their shoulders, thereafter on their left arm, hanging as far down as the ground. This almuce was of fine black or grey skin, brought from foreign countries, and frequently lined with ermine, and serves to this day to distinguish the Canons Regular from the other religious orders."³

There were seven canonical hours when the monks and canons were summoned by bell to devotion: Prime at 6 A.M.; Tierce or 9 A.M.; Sext or noon; Nones, 2 or 3 P.M.; Vespers, 4 P.M.; Compline, 7 P.M.; Matins and Lauds at midnight.

Such is an account of the new order in Abernethy, and *existing* documents are singularly silent for a time about the church and priory. The lay element now predominated at the expense of the ecclesiastical, and as far as external events occurred in connection with the church, we learn almost next to nothing. There are, however, two notices which are not altogether uninteresting.⁴

¹ Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, vol. i. p. 283.

² "In the year 1115 a body of Canons Regular of St Augustine, known as Black Canons, came to Scotland from the monastery of St Oswald's, near Pontefract, at the invitation of King Alexander and his queen Sibella (daughter of Henry I. of England), who gave to them the church of Scone (Fordun, 'Scotichron.,' v. 37). . . . A few years after the foundation of Scone, the Canons Regular were introduced into the diocese of Dunkeld. Alexander also built priories for them on an island in Loch Tay, and on Inchcolm in the Firth of Forth. He also gave to the church of Scone the right to hold a court."—Bellesheim, vol. i. p. 286.

³ Catalogue of Scottish Bishops, pp. 393, 394.

⁴ The following is an interesting fragment: "The church of St Brigida in the province of Athol was reputed famous for miracles, and a portion of her relics was kept with great veneration in the monastery of regular canons at Abernethy."—Alban Butler, quoting "Major de Gestis Scotorum," t. 2, c. 14, in note to 'Life of St Bridget.'

In the year 1274 the Pope wrote to the Scottish bishops, and the Scottish provincials of the orders of St Dominic and St Francis, exhorting them to preach up the crusade, and appointing Benemundus de Vicci, a canon of the Cathedral of Asti in Piedmont, to collect the Scottish subsidy. Benemundus proposed to assess the clergy according to the actual yearly worth of their benefices, which was to be ascertained from each on oath. The clergy reclaimed against this at a council meeting held at Perth in August 1275, and prevailed upon the collector to return to Rome and entreat the Pope that the subsidy might be levied according to the ancient valuation, and that its payment might be spread over seven years. The appeal made to the Pope was of no avail, and Boiamund returned to Scotland to complete the valuation roll of the benefices: this roll is still called Bagimont's roll, was finished in 1275, and served until the Reformation for the appointment of ecclesiastical taxes. A great part of the valuation of the Abernethy benefice would be included in that of Arbroath Monastery, which is fixed at 600 ducats, while the provostship of the collegiate church of Abernethy was fixed at £53.¹ The abbacy of Inchaffray is fixed at £1000, which would also include some interest in the priory at Abernethy. £53 is a small pittance to remain from vast possessions, and is a conspicuous example of how great families arose and left the Church poor by Church property passing into their hands.

Another notice that we have of the parish is in the year 1465, when a provincial council was held at Perth on the Feast of St Kenelm. It sat for two days at least, evidently over a controversy between the Bishop of Dunblane and the Lord Abbot of Arbroath concerning the tithes of the large property of Pitlour, at that time in the parish of Abernethy, but now in the neighbouring parish of Strathmiglo. In the charter of Laurence the lands of Pitlour are among those given to the Abbey of Arbroath, and it is somewhat difficult to understand the subject of controversy, since the charter

¹ Roll in Preface to '*Statuta Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ*,' p. lxx.

evidence is so clear upon the subject. Probably the Bishop of Dunblane felt aggrieved that so many of the possessions of a church in his diocese should belong to the Abbot of Arbroath, and perceived also some irregularities in the management of them. It was an accepted rule that when the monks of an abbey worked a land property themselves, they did not pay tithes to the bishop of the diocese: on the other hand, if a lease of the land was given to some neighbouring proprietor and the monks received its value in rent, the law seems to have been that tithes were due the diocesan bishop by the abbey. Probably the difficulty was in this connection, and evidently the bishop did not prove his case, for the council decided against Dunblane in favour of Arbroath, and the bishop renounced all claim to the great tithes of the land of Pitlour, affirming that they belonged to the Lord Abbot of Arbroath and his convent.¹

This statute is also interesting for the general Church history of medieval Scotland, in so far as it declares that the council of the clergy was held yearly, according to ancient and approved use, by permission of the Apostolic See,² "*annuatim tento.*" As the proceedings of these councils rarely found their way into record, it is interesting to have the statement that they were held yearly, and thus in unbroken succession since 1225, when the bull of Pope Honorius III. authorised the Scottish Church to hold provincial councils, although as yet it had no archbishop.³ This council was to be summoned by the Conservator, who was to be elected by the assembled prelates, and who received a quasi-metropolitan authority: the office of Conservator lasted from one Synod to another, and during his year of office all the Church dignitaries and clergy were subject to him. Bishops, abbots, and priors were bound to attend this annual council, while cathedral chapters, collegiate bodies, and convents were represented by their procu-

¹ See Preface to 'Stat. Eccles. Scot.,' p. cclvi.

² *Ut supra.*

³ See Preface to 'Stat. Eccles. Scot.,' p. li.

rators.¹ The object of this yearly council was to strengthen discipline, correct abuses, reform morals, and enforce the statutes of previous councils.

We have now shown the relationship of Abernethy to Arbroath, Inchaffray, and Dunblane ; it must now be our endeavour to sketch the history of the great lay family of Abernethy, with which the history of its church is closely allied until the Reformation. Before doing so, however, it will be necessary to devote the next chapter to the sculptured stones belonging to the parish and surviving from the Celtic period.

¹ Bellesheim, vol. i. p. 342.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXI.

In volumes just published there appear the names of certain of the clergy in Abernethy.

From 1327-1332 John De Leys appears as possessing the "perpetual" vicarage of Abernethy, and receives papal letters to hold along with it the canonry of Dunkeld with reservation of a prebend, canonry of Dunblane, canonry and prebend of Moray, canonry of Glasgow with expectation of a prebend, rectory of Kynelle.¹

Alexander Bell appears as secular prior of the collegiate church of Abernethy.²

In 1345 William de Coventrie, Licentiate in Civil Law, held the canonries and prebends of Ross and Abernethy.³

In 1379 Laurence Laverok, Scholar of Canon Law, had the perpetual vicarage of Abernethy.⁴

In 1379 John de Balnany had a prebend in Abernethy and a benefice in the gift of the Abbot of Lindores.⁵

In 1378 John de Meldoun had a canonry and prebend of Abernethy.⁶

In 1394 Laurence Laverok was prebend in Abernethy, and had the church of Madoe (St Madoes).⁷

In 1416 William de Colunye had a prebend in Abernethy with the vicarage of Culesy.⁸

In 1394 Finlai Colini (chaplain to the Duke of Albany) had the perpetual vicarage of Abernethy, canonries with prebends in Dunkeld and Dunblane, with the hospital of Ochtirogate. (A noted pluralist!) The petition was granted at Avignon,⁹ 3 Id. Oct. an 1. Ad vacatura post, Id. Dec. an 7.

¹ See 'Calendar of Papal Registers,' vol. i. pp. 271, 303, 363, 368, 384.

² 16 Clement VII., Anti-Pope, vol. i. p. 579.

³ Calendar of Papal Registers (1342-1419), p. 89.

⁴ Ibid., p. 593.

⁵ Ibid., p. 542.

⁶ Ibid., p. 550.

⁷ Roll of Examiners for England and Scotland.

⁸ Papal Registers, p. 606.

⁹ From 1309 to 1377 Avignon was the seat of the Papal Court; from 1378 to 1418 it was the seat of the French anti-Pope.

CHAPTER XXII.

SCULPTURED STONES OF ABERNETHY; MUGDRUM
AND MACDUFF CROSSES.

“Art cannot be barbarous, for the simple reason that it is Art.”—VIOLETT LE DUC.

THERE still survive several sculptured stones in the parish which belong to the Celtic period, and we have good reason to believe that many such perished at the Reformation period. There can be no reasonable doubt that an ancient foundation like Abernethy must have been very rich in illuminated manuscripts and stones with carved symbols: all the manuscripts have perished or are yet to be discovered, let us hope, in some safe archive. The carved stones that remain awaken in us a regret for what has been lost, and afford an interesting glimpse of the life and work of the Celtic Church.

The Church drew forth the inherent richness of the Celtic nature, and gave an expression to its many-sidedness, but certainly not least of all to its artistic faculty. Whether we consider Celtic work in ornamented or ornamental construction, in the illumination of manuscripts or the carving of stones, it cannot but be acknowledged that it is of a first-rate order. A learned authority has said :—

The true glory of the Celt in Europe is his artistic eminence. It is not too much to assert that without his intervention we should not

have possessed in modern times a church worthy of admiration, or a picture or a statue we could look at without shame. . . . In their arts we escape the fixity which makes the arts of the pure Turanian as unprogressive as the works of birds or of beavers. Restless, intellectual progress characterises everything they perform; and had their arts not been nipped in the bud by circumstances over which they had no control, we might have seen something that would have shamed even Greece, and wholly eclipsed the arts of Rome. . . . Where no Celtic blood existed, there no real art is found. . . . Not only Architecture, but Painting and Sculpture have been patronised, and have flourished in the exact ratio in which Celtic blood is found prevailing in any people of Europe.¹

What this scholar points out as true of the Celtic nature in general, is true of its development in Scotland. The illumination of the manuscripts and the carving on the stones reveal an artistic nature highly disciplined and educated, quick, sensitive to higher forms, charged with creative fancy. Mr Matthew Arnold does justice to the Celtic nature when he describes it as an organisation quick to feel impressions, and feeling them very strongly—as a lively personality, keenly sensitive to joy and sorrow, whose essence is to aspire ardently after life, light, and emotion, to be expansive, adventurous, gay.² On the other hand, he does very scant justice to the work of the Celt when he avers that “in the comparatively petty art of ornamentation, in rings, brooches, crosiers, relic-cases, and so on, he has done just enough to show his delicacy of taste, his happy temperament.”³ We cannot look at these Celtic manuscripts without feeling that there is more than “delicacy of taste” and “happy temperament” displayed in them: there is proportion, symmetry, thoroughness, even in the most minute details. There is perfect touch and refined judgment in the use of ornament; decoration is maintained in its right place, and in subordination to the primary conception,—never confused with it, but regarded as an aid to illustrate and unfold it. The Book of

¹ Sir James Fergusson, *History of Architecture*, vol. i. pp. 73, 74.

² *The Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 84.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Kells, which is the product of a period before the year 1000 A.D., is an example of this. "No effort," says Miss Stokes, "to transcribe any one page of this book has fully conveyed the perfection of execution and the rich harmony of colour which belong to this wonderful work. It is no exaggeration to say that, as with the microscopic works of nature or the delicate framework of a leaf when its skeleton is revealed, the stronger the magnifying power brought to bear upon it, the more is this perfection seen. No single false interlacement or uneven curve in the spirals, no faint trace of a trembling hand or wandering thought, can be detected. The intense concentration of mind necessary for the accomplishment of work so minute, where the brain would seem as it were drawn to a needle's point to fulfil its purpose, becomes a pain to contemplate."¹

The artistic genius of the Celtic Church did not find expression in beautifully decorated churches. On the contrary, it is to be noticed that until Norman influence was felt, there are few indications of architectural detail or sculpture to be found in either the Irish or Scottish Churches.² They were generally square or oblong, with window facing eastward and door facing westward: they were simple in design, generally without ornament, and what made them distinctively Christian was the presence of an altar and cross. Yet it is noteworthy that, while this simplicity characterised the churches, there was an abundance of ornamentation in connection with the manuscripts and of sculpture on the early monuments.

The most reasonable explanation seems to be that the art was perfected by the scribes in the monastery before it was copied by the sculptors on the stones and by the bronze-workers on the metals.³ The art on both is the same, and exhibits throughout

¹ Early Christian Architecture in Ireland, p. 127.

² The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland, vol. i. p. 24.

³ The following extract from a life of St Dunstan shows that even the highest ecclesi-

the same characteristics; the artist evidently trained himself by copying the manuscripts which date from the close of the seventh century, before he could possess either the knowledge or the skill necessary for the later work exhibited on the monuments. It is the example of an esoteric art becoming exoteric,—of what was enjoyed by an educated class becoming at length popularised. We see in the transference of the Celtic designs from the manuscripts to the stones a widening of culture—an endeavour to make what was at first a monopoly the possession of the people. There is much to be said in favour of this view, since Dr Anderson proves the sculptured stones with crosses to belong to the later period of the Celtic Church in Scotland—to the period immediately preceding the twelfth century, or that between the tenth and the twelfth centuries.¹

The Celtic cross differs from the Latin, which was also the Eastern form, in so far as the arms of the latter always make an angle with the shaft, while the Celtic cross always has semicircular hollows or curves where the arms intersect the shaft and summit. The Abernethy sculptured stones belong to that type which is peculiarly Celtic in character, and are only found within, never beyond, the area, on the eastern half of Scotland, north of the Forth and from Fife to Caithness.² Of this type there is not one single example found south of the Forth or Clyde; the stones all belong to the region inhabited by the Northern and Southern Picts, and they exhibit a distinctive and individual type. The characteristics of this type of Celtic cross have been made clear by the investigations of scholars like Dr Anderson and Dr Stuart. (a) The form of the monument is an erect slab, shaped to a regular form, and

astics of the day engaged in this work : "This holy childe Dunstan was borne in ye yere of our Lorde ix. hondred & xxv., that tyme reynnyng in this londe Kinge Athelston. . . . Whan it so was that Saynt Dunstan was wery of prayer than used he to werke in goldsmythes werke with his owne handes for to eschewe ydelnes."—Golden Legend.

¹ Scotland in Early Christian Times, Second Series, p. 95.

² See the works of Drs Anderson and Stuart.

occasionally edged with a bead-like moulding. (*b*) On the obverse side it bears the representation of the cross, and on the reverse symbols and figure-subjects. (*c*) The cross is the full length of the stone, with the peculiar form already indicated; it is generally recessed at the meeting-point of the arms and shaft; arms and shaft are generally connected by a circle or semicircular hollow. (*d*) The cross is generally decorated with interlaced work, which is frequently extended to other parts of the monument. (*e*) The ornamentation, which in style and character is the same as the ornamentation on the manuscripts and metal-work of Celtic Christian times, occurs in groups of figure-subjects and symbols.¹

Within the area already indicated, and characterised by the cross-slabs just described, there are also found oblong stones or boulders, set up without any attempt to remove their natural irregularities or shape them into a symmetrical form. Their sculpturings are of incised work, and the symbols are only to be found on one side of the stone. These symbols generally consist of (*a*) the "crescent and sceptre"; (*b*) the "double disc" or "spectacles"; (*c*) the same with sceptre; (*d*) the oblong with sceptre; (*e*) the "elephant"; (*f*) serpent combined with zigzag or V-shaped rod with floriated ends.

Dr Anderson points out that the absence of foliage is a distinctive characteristic of Celtic art, and regards the degree of the prevalence of this foliaceous scroll-work as indicating the degree of departure from the purity of Celtic art. The crosses which present foliaceous scroll-work usually have also the representation of the crucifixion, and the latest of the monumental types is that which bears the crucifixion and is decorated with foliaceous scrolls.²

The symbols on the monuments have been regarded as representations of personal ornaments, marks of personal distinction,

¹ Scotland in Early Christian Times, Second Series, p. 73.

² *Uti supra*, pp. 82, 83.

such as family descent, tribal rank, or official dignity.¹ They had a deeper significance and are the symbols of a vanished creed ; they had a symbolical meaning which we fail to interpret to-day, because we have lost the key and have yet to rediscover it.² Mythology is an old form of language, and to the early men in our district, who were ignorant of letters, these symbols were probably used by the Celtic Church to convey a deep lesson. "Pictures are poor men's books," and we are probably near the truth in supposing that the symbolism of these stone slabs had a religious significance. It is unlikely that it would have been placed side by side with the cross if it had not been more than personal ornament or evidence of personal distinction. Not heraldic but religious significance would alone justify such a position in Celtic art.

The frequent representations of stags and stag-hunting, on the other hand, seem to have had a religious meaning as their object. The significance of this is seen from the '*Hortus Deliciarum*, or Garden of Delights,' a treatise of the twelfth century, which perished at the siege of Strasburg in 1870. "We offer to God the spoils of our chase, when, by example or precept, we convert the wild beasts—that is to say, the wicked men. The chase of the Christian is the conversion of sinners. These are represented by hares, by goats, by wild boars, or by stags. The hares signify the incontinent, the goats the proud, the wild boars the rich, and the stags the worldly-wise. These four beasts we smite with four darts by our example of continence, humility, voluntary poverty, and perfect charity ; we pursue them with dogs when we arouse their fears by the preaching of the Word."³ The serpent was used to represent the seductive sting of sin.

¹ See Dr Stuart's Intro. to '*Sculptured Stones*,' vol. ii. p. 4.

² "That it may be solved by a brilliant guess is possible ; that the key may be found by a chance discovery is more probable ; that it can be extracted from the materials now at our command by any process of scientific investigation appears to me impossible."—Dr Anderson's *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, Second Series, p. 189.

³ Bellesheim's *History of the Catholic Church of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 381.

Reference has already been made to the lick-stones, and as they do not come under any of the three categories about to be indicated, we will at this point treat of them. Although only a few stones now remain, there seems no reason to doubt that there were originally here what Dr Stuart calls stone pillars, probably to indicate an ancient cemetery: whether they bore inscriptions or symbolism or oghams it is impossible now to say. The same learned authority traces the gradual progress from these rude pillars of pagan times to the inscribed but unhewn pillar which records the name of the person to whose memory it was erected. These lick-stones in Abernethy are situated between the parish church and the property of Innerneath, and within a quarter of a mile from the church. Dr Laing says:—

There were also at a little distance from Abdie church two upright stones, known as the Lickerstones, whose origin and use are both alike lost in antiquity. They consisted of unhewn boulders about 3 feet high, somewhat square on the sides and flat on the top. They were removed about the beginning of the present century, and it is said were applied to some utilitarian purpose in effecting some repairs on the out-buildings of the manse. Stones bearing the same name are found in other places in Scotland, and invariably on the side of the road leading from the outskirts of the parish to the churchyard. . . . In a record of the marches of the lands of Kirkness, as bestowed on the Culdees of Lochleven by Macbeth and his Queen Gruoch, preserved in the Register of the Priory of St Andrews (p. 1), entered certainly not later than the middle of the fourteenth century, "a heap of stones called in the vulgar tongue lykirstyne" is specially mentioned as one of the points of the march or boundary. . . . Tradition, however, is uniform that the corpse carried to burial was laid on them, and that the priest there met the funeral procession and began the service for the burial of the dead. From this traditionally assumed reading of the service, it has been conjectured by some that the name is derived from the Latin word *lector*, signifying a reader; but the oldest orthography, coupled with the fact that it is expressly said to be known in the vulgar tongue as the Lykirstane, goes to prove that the name is derived from the old English or Saxon word *lic* or *lych*, a corpse, hence Lychstane, and that these stones were connected with the burial of the dead.¹

¹ Lindores Abbey and its Burgh of Newburgh, pp. 66, 67.

These stones belong to a very early and probably a pagan period, and were evidently erected for sepulchral and cenotaphic purposes: honour to the dead and propitiation or invocation of the spirits of departed heroes were the leading ideas that led to their erection. They may also have been surrounded by a circle of smaller erect stones, and would keep fresh in memory the deeds of heroism done by those who had fallen in battle, and thus serve as histories, in the days when records were unknown. At a later time they may have been associated with other purposes, but such seem to have been their primary objects.¹

The monuments found in the north-east area of Scotland arrange themselves in a progressive scale:—

(a) The earliest are those on which the symbols are found alone, and may be characterised as those of the incised symbol-type.

(b) Those that have the symbol associated with the cross.

(c) Those that belong to the period after the twelfth century and have the cross alone.

With these general observations upon Celtic art, and with the above order in its general development, we are able to understand the setting in which the Abernethy stones must be placed, and the most likely order of their appearance. In treating of them, we cannot but express the regret that so many of them are fragmentary, and the hope that many others may yet be discovered.

I. There are three stones on which the symbols are found alone and apart from any representation of the cross, and which thus belong to the first of the orders just indicated.

(a) One of these is an irregular oblong stone with incised symbolism on the obverse side of it (sculptured stone, Plate I.) It is now placed in the wall at the entrance to Mornington, on the Church Wynd. It is $2\frac{3}{4}$ feet long by 2 feet broad, and was dug out of the foundation of a house on the same spot where it now

¹ Cf. 'Rude Stone Monuments,' by J. Fergusson, D.C.L., &c.

is, about thirty years ago. It was thus found on a spot near the present parish church, and which tradition, well-founded evidently, identifies as the place where the Columban monastery originally was. The top part is broken off, but what remains exhibits an excised representation of the crescent and a V-shaped rod with floriated ends. There is also a representation of an anvil, a hammer, and part of what appears to be pincers with ornamentation. Reference has already been made to this in a former chapter (p. 67).

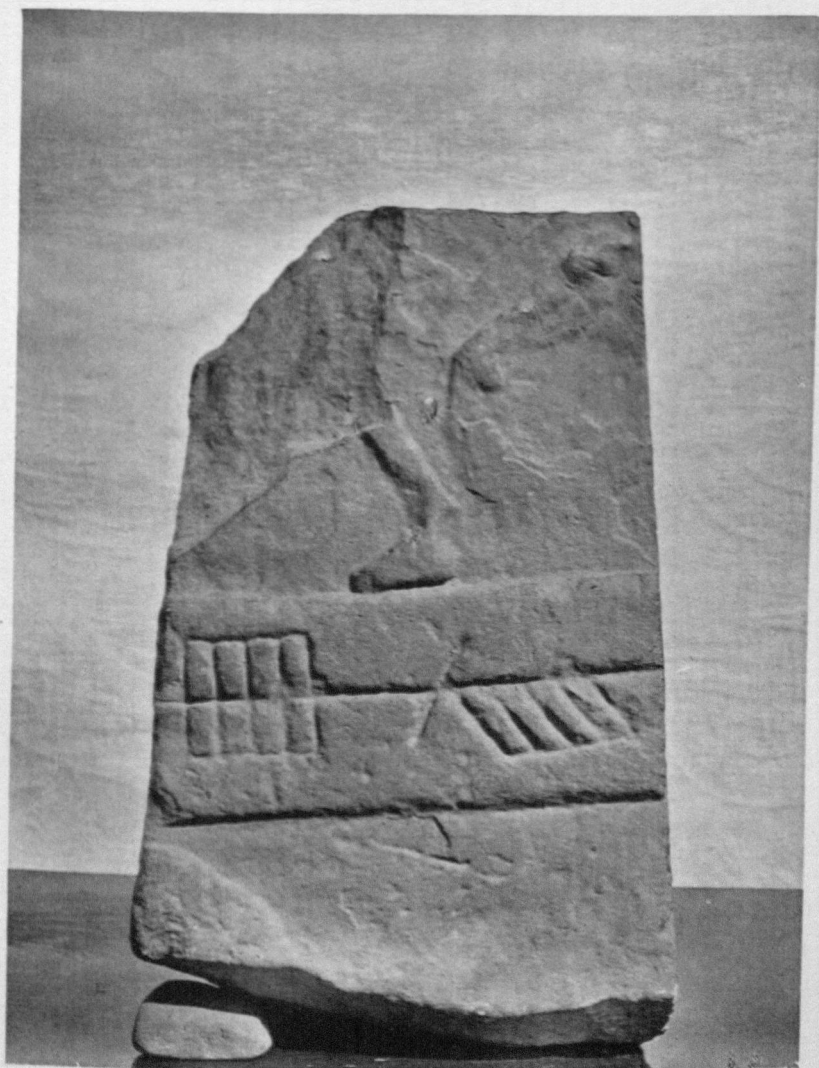
(*b*) The other is a fragment found in one of the houses on the Station Road, and now in the National Museum at Edinburgh. It is 14 inches in length, 8 inches in breadth, and 3 inches in thickness. The fragment contains the representation of the legs of a horse with an ogham inscription—both excised (sculptured stone, Plate II.) Professor Rhys of Oxford thus refers to it:—

I am delighted to learn that it has been presented to the National Museum by David Laing, LL.D., F.S.A. Scot. For my information about it I am indebted to my friend Mr Allen, from whom I learn that the piece of stone shows, besides the Ogam scores, certain portions of the legs of a horse, so it was probably ornamented with a hunting scene; but I must confess that I do not quite understand the relative position of the sculpture and the Ogam. The writing consists of the three letters, which would be either *i, m, n*, or *q, m, i*, according to the direction of the reading, which is hard to tell. The Ogams are, however, instructive, as the two longer ones consist of tied scores or bind Ogams, such as we shall presently find in the Islands, a circumstance which establishes the practical oneness of the entire series from Fife to the Shetlands.¹

Sir Samuel Ferguson avers that the oghamic monuments of Scotland differ from those of Ireland, Wales, and England; that in the Scottish class the scholastic variety prevails, and digits constitute vowels as well as consonants; that in the latter classes there is both digit and notch.²

¹ Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries in Scotland, 1891-92, p. 268.

² Ogham Inscriptions, p. 133.



Sculptured Stone.

PLATE II.



As far as Scotland is concerned, Dr Joseph Anderson asserts that they are Celtic and Celtic exclusively, and that outside of the Celtic area no oghams are found. Special areas have special types; and after an exhaustive investigation, Dr Anderson identifies the area of the oghams in Scotland as ranging along the East Coast from Fife to Shetland—as, in fact, conterminous with that of the peculiar type of sculptured stones already indicated.

They appear with the dawning of Christian monumental art in this country, and they continue until that art has reached its highest development in its purely Celtic form; but they are not carried down with it through any of the stages of degradation by which it passed into the purely foliaceous scroll-work, after it had lost its distinctively Celtic character. Their art associations on the monuments are thus entirely Celtic.¹ Runes [he continues] are the alphabetical character used by the Teutonic nations of the Continent before they adopted the letters of the Roman alphabet. The Celts had their Oghams, the Teutons their Runes. These Runes were the original old northern alphabet. Their home was in Northern Europe, and they therefore appear in this country as wanderers and strangers to the soil.²

In the light of the conclusions of such scholars, the Abernethy ogham stone is one of interest.

(c) There is still to be seen in the wall of a cottage near the Council House a small square stone with Celtic ornamentation alone of the square type.

II. We now come to the second class of the sculptured stones—viz., those on which the symbols are associated with the cross.

(a) On December 29, 1893, there was unearthed a stone slab bearing on the obverse side the incised shaft of a Celtic cross. The stone is sandstone (conglomerate), 27 inches in length by 21 inches in breadth and $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness. The obverse side has carved on it the shaft of a cross the full length of the stone and $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth—with Celtic work upon it, but so

¹ Scotland in Early Christian Times, Second Series, pp. 212-214.

² Ibid., pp. 238, 239.

weather-worn as to be scarcely visible. Unfortunately it is broken at the semicircular hollows where the shaft joins the arms, and the part containing the arms and the summit is not yet discovered. At the part of the stone near the semicircular hollows the evidences of tracery are very clear indeed.

On the reverse side there is a very obscure and evidently a very early form of symbolism which it is now difficult to form an accurate conception of (sculptured stone, Plate III.) It seems to be a representation of a tree—probably of the “tree of life”—with the serpent entwined around it. It is 16 inches in length and 7 inches in breadth at the broadest point.

(b) In the estate of Mugdrum, adjacent to Mugdrum Cross, there is to be seen the fragment of another Celtic cross belonging to the second class. It is considerably damaged, but what remains is sufficient to exhibit distinctive features. On the obverse side there is to be seen an excised cross-shaft with Celtic ornamentation; the hollow at the meeting point of the left arm and shaft is both circular and through the stone, forming a circular hollow to the cross arm excised on the other side. On the obverse side there is a representation of a stag, and under it a hound; on the reverse side the representation of a serpent with horns (sculptured stone, Plate IV.) The fragment is 2 feet long, 20 inches broad, and 7 inches thick.

This stone belongs to an interesting type, in so far as it shows the transition between the stones with representations of the cross upon them and the free-standing cross. The hollows at the intersection of the arms with the shaft are complete circles, as already indicated, and carried through the stone, and nothing more is necessary than the cutting away of the panels on both sides of the shaft, and the sculptors have found their way towards the free-standing cross. It is thus interesting by way of development, and is similar to the slabs at Gask and Fordoun.¹

¹ See Dr Anderson's ‘Scotland in Early Christian Times,’ Second Series, note, p. 78.



Sculptured Stone.

PLATE III.



Sculptured Stone.

PLATE IV.

(c) There is another example which belongs to the second class, and yet is an exception to the second class. It is the lovely and well-known Mugdrum Cross. It has several of the features that characterise the second class—such as symbolism—and yet it is different, in so far as it is a free-standing cross, and not like the two former ones, excised on stone. The Mugdrum Cross is similar to other examples at Dupplin, St Andrews, Monifieth, Strathmartine, and Drainie—all exceptions to the peculiar type already indicated as belonging to the north-eastern coast of Scotland. They are all crosses in reality, hewn out of the solid stone, and stand in sockets or pedestals.¹

Only the shaft now remains, but at the upper part of it there are distinct features which indicate that it was originally cruciform. The shaft is 11 feet in height, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in breadth at the broadest part, and 16 inches thick. The stone in which it is mortised is $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, $3\frac{3}{4}$ feet broad, and 2 feet 3 inches in thickness. The reverse side evidently had symbolism sculptured on it, but it is utterly weather-worn. The obverse side (looking eastward) contains a representation of boar and hounds, and elk, with horse, huntsmen, and spear.

Fortunately the 'New Statistical Account of Scotland'² contains an engraving of the east and north sides of the cross, which help one better to understand the figures and the symbolism, for the weather during the past fifty years has told severely upon them. The obverse side is divided into four sections or series of figures. The upper two are of equal size, and contain each the representation of a warrior or huntsman on horseback. The third section from the top has a representation of two figures, the larger one of which seems to be overtaking or running down the smaller. The lowest division seems to be the representation of a boar-hunt. The boar and hounds are quite discernible still, and there is also a representation of what appears to be an elk. The north side

¹ *Ut supra*, p. 78.

² Vol. iv. p. 68.

of the stone has carved ornamentation; on the south side it is completely worn away.

There is a difference of opinion as to the meaning of Mugdrum. Some derive it from *muc* and *druim* (see p. 27); others hold it to be derived from Magridin (Mo-Odran), and named after St Adrian, who was, as we have already seen (p. 166), one of the three early bishops of Abernethy. But whatever doubt there may be as to the etymology, there can be no doubt that the lands of Mugdrum were dedicated to St Adrian,¹ and an oratory seems to have been erected in his honour at or near the spot where the cross stands.

It is interesting also to observe that the stone of which it is built is the same as that at Macduff's Cross, and that used in the building of the round tower at Abernethy. Those competent to speak upon such a subject aver that it is only to be found on the Lomond Hills, about eight miles south, with the ridge of the Ochils intervening.

Taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration, it is a most probable and reasonable conclusion that, like the round tower,² it was erected during the time, or not long after the time, when St Adrian and his company arrived on the Isle of May, and penetrated thence into Fife to preach the Gospel; that it witnesses to the presence of the Columban clergy, who were restored during the reign of Kenneth MacAlpin to the ancient Columban foundations (see p. 159); that both it and the round tower stand as companion memorials of an early missionary movement and

¹ *Uti supra*, p. 78.

² The late Rev. Dr Anderson, minister of Newburgh, regarded the Mugdrum Cross as erected to commemorate the defeat of the Danes. He says: "If this is the purpose of the cross under consideration—to commemorate a similar defeat at Luncarty, about the close of the tenth century—certainly no site could be more appropriate for it than the immediate vicinity of the family mansion, where it now stands, of the direct lineal descendants of the patriotic Hay and his stalwart sons, who turned the tide of battle, and obtained in reward the hawk's flight, being the property of Leys, which is still in their possession" ('New Statis. Account,' vol. ix. p. 69). I am unable to accept this view of its origin here stated. Still the remarks are interesting, in so far as they connect the cross with the period of the Danish attacks,—a period in which the round tower also was erected, probably immediately after the martyrdom of St Adrian.



Mugdrum Cross.

revived religious impulse. Such is its historical setting, but it is surrounded with hallowed associations, and its grey lichen-grown stone speaks much to him who has ears to hear. One may say of it, in the beautiful verse of Dr Walter C. Smith—and his description of “the Ancient Cross” would make one almost believe that he had the Mugdrum Cross before him when he wrote:—

“Lo! then there travelled o’er the sea,
From the lone isle where saints were bred,
A peaceful, unarmed company
Who brought good news of God, they said :
They suffered much, yet did not grieve,
They laboured much, and wearied not,
They bore with joy a bitter lot,
And sang their hymns at morn and eve.

They sang about the dim grey seas,
And One that walked upon their wave ;
They sang about the streams and trees
In a far land beyond the grave ;
And when Norse axe, or wild kerne’s knife,
Unpitying, smote bare head or breast,
They sweetly sang themselves to rest
With songs about the Crown of Life.

By suffering thus subduing wrath,
They conquered those who vanquished them ;
And corn grew on the waste war-path,
And nets dried where the long ships came,
And there was wealth where had been loss,
And ringing bells for clash of swords,
And needing no explaining words,
On the old stone they graved a Cross.

And there it stands, the cross-chaŕmed stone,
On the green spit beyond the trees ;
It hears by night the faint sea-moan,
By day the song-bird and the breeze,
And Christian bells, and sounding trains,
And the hard grinding of the wheels ;
And now and then a pilgrim kneels,
And tells to it his griefs and pains.”¹

¹ Raban, or Life Splinters, p. 81.

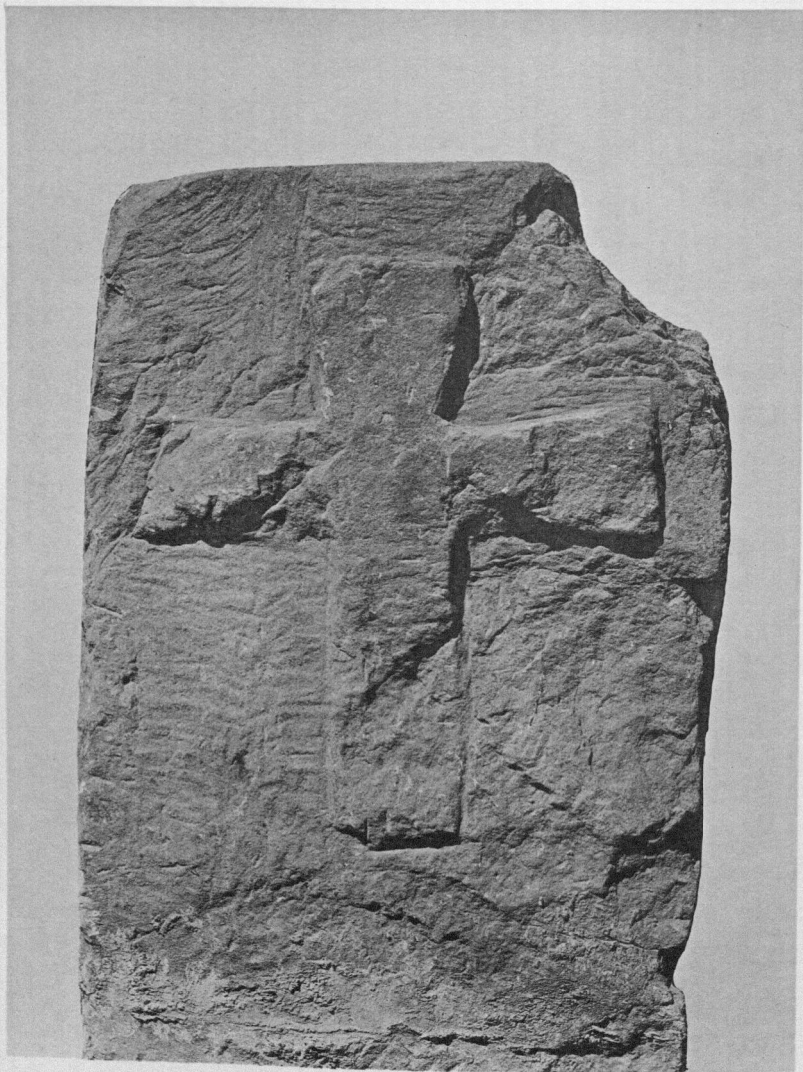
Again, while the Cross of Mugdrum stands as a memorial of St Adrian and his disciples, I cannot resist the impression that it was one of the girth-crosses of the ancient church of Abernethy. Unquestionably, like many of the old foundations, it possessed the right of sanctuary, and most likely the Mugdrum Cross was one of the boundaries of the church-girth. In those wild and lawless days the Church raised its voice for mercy, and, as Dr Cosmo Innes says, "to violate the protection of the *frith-stol*—the seat of peace or of the *fertre*—the shrine of relics behind the altar—was not like other offences, to be compensated by a pecuniary penalty; it was *bot-leas*, beyond compensation."¹

The crosses of Mugdrum and Macduff are now within the bounds of the neighbouring parish of Newburgh; but they were originally within the parish of Abernethy, for the parish of Newburgh was created in 1632 by an act of separation and disjunction from Abdie; and by a subsequent application to the commissioners a portion of the parish of Abernethy, where these crosses are situated, was also disjoined and annexed to that of Newburgh.² The western part of Newburgh thus belonged to Abernethy, and the name Abdie is a corruption of Abthania, Abthen, or Abden, the name given to the old Church lands belonging to the Columban Monastery of Abernethy. The Church lands were thus very extensive, extending many miles on the east side of the Abernethy monastery, and probably as many on the other sides; there were most likely crosses on the other sides for a similar purpose, but the Mugdrum Cross and the "Macduff" Cross originally served the purpose on the eastern side of indicating the church-girth or right of sanctuary. That seems to have been their original purpose, and to treat them apart from the church of Abernethy is to take them out of their historical setting.

Even so early as the reign of William the Lion we find that boundaries are marked by such objects as the "old elm," "the

¹ Scotland in the Middle Ages, p. 195.

² New Statis. Account, vol. ix. p. 56.



Sculptured Stone.

PLATE V.

oak on which a cross was made," "the well beside the white thorn," "the cross beside the green ditch," "the osier-bed," "the crosses and trenches made on the hill-top by King David."¹

The above-mentioned crosses are examples of this, and speak of an old sanctuary-girth attached to the Abernethy church.

We have now seen that there are examples of sculptured stones in Abernethy (*a*) with symbols alone, (*b*) with symbols associated with the cross, and a celebrated cross which presents an exception to those found in the north-east of Scotland beyond the Forth.

III. (*a*) We have one that bears an excised representation of the cross without the symbols. It evidently belongs to the period after the twelfth century. The space between the arms and the shaft is slightly curved, but not so distinctively as in the case of the earlier crosses. It speaks of the Roman influence, which by this period had very considerably permeated the Celtic Church, and seems to indicate not only a conformity in polity but an approach to Latin forms of sculpture. On close examination it will be seen to be a transition between the purely Celtic and the Latin cross, where the lines always make angles at the intersection of the arms. The cross still bears a distinctively Celtic feature, in so far as it is excised on a square slab. It is 2 feet long by $1\frac{1}{2}$ foot broad, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and is at present fixed in the western porch of the parish church (sculptured stone, Plate V.)

(*b*) There is a representation of a cross on a stone fixed in the lintel of Clunie farm, on the estate of Mugdrum, and not far from the Cross of Macduff. Tradition asserts that it was brought from this neighbourhood during the building of the farm. It is now very faint.

IV. Standing apart from the three categories, and, according to the investigations of Dr Anderson, of a later period, is a stone fragment containing a representation of the Crucifixion.² It is

¹ Sketches of Early Scottish History, p. 104.

² Scotland in Early Christian Times, Second Series, p. 83.

now in the National Museum at Edinburgh. On the obverse side traces of the feet of the crucified One are still visible; under the cross are three heads, evidently intended to represent the three Maries; on either side of the cross are representations of the soldiers—the one with the spear and the other with the sponge. It is early and rude (sculptured stone, Plate VI.) On the reverse side there is interlaced work, which also seems to characterise the thick edges. The fragment is 20 inches in length, 14 inches in breadth, and $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches in thickness¹ (sculptured stone, Plate VII.)

V. We now come to the Macduff Cross, which has a great historical importance attached to it. It is a cross the history of which is interwoven with the history of the early Earls of Fife and the church of Abernethy. Fortunately there are several references to Cross Macduff in ancient historical works.

Wyntoun, in his 'Cronykil of Scotland,' narrates:—

“ Quhen Makbeth-Fynlayk thus was slane,
Off Fyffe Makduff that tyme the Thane,
For his trawaille till his bownté
At Malcolme as kyng askyd thire thre.
Fyrst, till hys sete fra the awtare
(That he sulde be the kyngis) ledare,
And in that set thare set hym downe
Till tak his Coronatyowne,
For hym and hys posteryté,
Quhen-eyre the kyng suld crownyd be.
Efftyre that, the secownd thyng,
Wes, that he askyd at the kyng
Till haïve the waward off hys bataylle,
Quhat-evyr thai ware, wald it assaylle:
That he and hys suld haïve always,
Quhen that the kyng suld banare rays.
Or, gyff the Thayne off Fyff in were,
Or in till ost wyth hys powere,
Ware, the waward suld governyd be
Be hym and his posteryté.

¹ See 'Proceedings' for 1891-92, p. 261.

PLATE VI.
Sculptured Stone.





Sculptured Stone.

PLATE VII.

Efftyre this, the thryd askyng
That he askyt at the kyng,
Gyve ony be suddane chawdmellé
Hapynd swa slayne to be
Be ony off the Thaynys kyne,
Off Fyff the kynryk all wyth-in,
Gyve he swa slayne wer gentill-man,
Foure and twenty markys than :
For a yhwman twelf markys ay
The slaare suld for kynbwt pay,
And haïve full remyssyowne
Fra thine for all that actyowne,
Gyve ony hapnyd hym to sla,
That to that lawch ware bwndyn swa :
Off that privylage evyrmare
Partles suld be the slaare.
Off this lawch are thre capytale :
That is the Blak Prest off Weddale,
The Thayne off Fyffe, and the thryd syne
Quha ewyre be Lord off Abbyrnethyne.”¹

John of Fordun, in his ‘Chronicle of the Scottish Nation,’ says:

The greatest and chief of those who laboured to advance Malcolm to the throne was a distinguished, noble, and trusty man, named Macduff, Thane of Fife. Macduff kept the unknown purpose of his heart hidden longer and more carefully than the rest; but he was, nevertheless, again and again denounced to the king, until, at length, he was viewed with suspicion. . . . Then cautiously going away out of his presence, and stealthily avoiding the Court, Macduff went off with all haste, and quickly repaired to the sea; and as the wind did not seem likely to hold fair very long, he embarked on board a little vessel scantily stocked with food. So, after having undergone many dangers of the sea through boisterous weather, he safely landed in England, with bare life, and was there kindly received by Malcolm, on account of the support he had given him. But when his secret departure became known to the king, the latter was furious; and, calling his horses and horsemen every one, he hastily followed after the fugitive, until he had made sure that he saw, out at sea, and clear of the land, the little vessel in which Macduff had sailed. So, as he had no hope of being able to intercept her, he hastily came back, besieged all Macduff’s castles and strongholds, took his lands and estates,

¹ The Historians of Scotland, vol. iii. pp. 140, 141.

commanded everything that seemed precious or desirable to be confiscated, and, taking away all his substance, bade it to be placed in his own treasury. Moreover, he caused him to be proclaimed, by the voice of a herald, an exile for ever, and stripped of all his estates and other property whatsoever.

Macduff favoured the claims of Malcolm, helped his elevation to the throne, and was instrumental in the final deposition of Macbeth. Among the honours conferred upon him and his family were the privileges (1) to place the king on the royal seat at his coronation; (2) to command and lead the king's vanguard into battle; (3) that his kindred should be entitled to the "law of clan Macduff." According to Fordun, this law "conferred on the earl and all his posterity for ever the right that, if a noble person of their number should commit a sudden and unpremeditated slaughter, he should be free, on payment of twenty-four marks of kinbot, and if a common man, on payment of twelve marks."²

Dr Stuart considers the account of Boece to differ entirely from those already quoted, and regards him as defining the privilege as a right of regality conferred on the Clan Macduff, by which its head could repledge any of his own clan and territory from other courts in any part of the kingdom to his own court.³

Sir John Skene defines the right as one of girth, of which "the cross of Clan Makduffe, which divides Stratherne fra Fife abone the Newburgh, beside Lundoris," was the "caput." "The croce of Clan Makduff had privilege and liberty of girth, in sik sort that when any manslayer, being within the ninth degrie of kin and bluid to Makduff, sometime Earl of Fyffe, come to that croce, and gave nine kie and an *colpindach*, or young cow, he was free of the slaughter committed be him."⁴ We find in this account mentioned for the first time the right of girth; (2) the limitation of the right to those

¹ The Historians of Scotland, vol. iv. pp. 181, 182.

² Dr Stuart's Intro. to 'Sculptured Stones,' vol. ii. p. lxxvii.

³ Ibid., p. lxxviii.

⁴ De Verborum Significatione, *sub voce* "Clan Makduff."

within the ninth degree of kindred from the first Earl of Fife; (3) a difference of kinbot from what is stated in the previous accounts.

Taking all the evidence conjointly, we see that the privilege conferred on the Earl of Fife the right of repledging, from any other court to his own, those parties accused of unpremeditated slaughter who could claim a title of kinship to him and his successors.

Of this law, according to Wyntoun, there were "three capytale" or chief judges — the Thane of Fife, the Black Priest of Wedale, and the Lord of Abernethy.

Contiguous to Macduff's Cross is the property of Carpow, and this was probably the residence of the Lords of Abernethy in ancient days.

The first Earl of Fife that we know about is Ethelred, son of Malcolm Canmore and Queen Margaret: he was both Earl of Fife and Abbot of Dunkeld.¹ The Earls of Fife were always outstanding personalities in Scottish history: as such they were members of that "constitutional body termed the Seven Earls of Scotland, and their conjunction with a body of Seven Bishops seems to point to the old division of Albania into seven provinces, as the source of their constitutional privileges." Dr Skene, continuing, says: "It seems hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that these seven earls represented a constitutional body in Scotland before the appearance of the feudal *communitas* which formed the *curia regis* and the *magnum concilium regni*, and that they claimed to exercise certain privileges, and occasionally did exercise them, long after they were superseded by the latter body. The Earl of Fife seems always to have held the foremost position among the old traditionary earls of Scotland, and to have belonged to this body, and it was probably from his position at the head of that body that he possessed the privilege of placing the king in the royal chair."²

¹ Robertson's *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, vol. i. pp. 124, 255.

² *The Historians of Scotland*, vol. iv. pp. 436, 437.

The Earls of Fife were kin to the Abernethies of Abernethy, if they were not the Abernethies of Abernethy.

The courts, under the law of Clan Macduff, seem to have been held at Cupar on a certain day after proclamation. Wyntoun says:—

“ Gywe thare be ony that lykis
The lawch for to se led off this,
Quhen be crye the day is set,
As fallys to be done off dete,
To Cowpyr in Fyffe than cum he ;
Welle led that lawch thare sall he se.”¹

Fortunately the chartulary of Inchaffray furnishes an interesting illustration of the operation of the law of Clan Macduff. Sir Alexander de Moravia was accused of the slaughter of William de Spaldyne, and indicted for the crime in the court of the High Justiciar, held by his deputies, Sir John and Morice de Drummond, at Foulis. On the 7th day of December 1391 he appeared with his fore-speakers, and protested that inasmuch as he had been once before called in judgment for that slaughter, and repledged to the law of Clan Macduff by Robert, Earl of Fife, he was not obliged to plead before any other judge to that charge until the said law of Clan Macduff should have had its privilege in regard to him, thus repledged to its jurisdiction ; and he demanded to be lawfully discharged. The judges made answer that they would not discharge him, but would respite him until the question should be set at rest by the Lord of Brechin, the principal justiciar.²

There is also evidence of the privilege of Clan Macduff having saved Hugh de Arbuthnott and his accomplices from being proceeded against for the slaughter of John de Melvil of Glenbervy in 1421.³

Sir John Skene tells us, “ I saw ane auld evident beand that Spens of Wormestoun, beand of Makduffe’s kinne, injoyed the

¹ Scotichron., bk. vi. ch. xix.

² Liber Insull. Missarum, App. to Pref., p. xlix.

³ Analect. Scot., ii. 30.

benefitte and immunitie of this law for the slauchter of ane called Kynnynmonth.”¹

The existence of the privilege is confirmed by the evidence of an Act of Parliament held in 1384, and during the reign of King Robert II. Certain laws were enacted regarding katheranes, and the Earl of Fife agreed that, “as principal of law of Clan Macduff, he would cause them to be observed within his bounds.”² In the fragmentary code of laws it is enacted that the *duellum* or wager of battle may be remitted in three instances, the second being “by the law of the Clan Macduff for the slaughter of one of the kin, if the kin of the other party can come in the place of combat when the appealer is provenand his lance.”³

The lordship of the Earls of Fife seems to have extended over territory which at present is known as the parishes of Cupar, Kilmany, Ceres, and Cameron, Strathmiglo, Auchtermuchty.⁴ Dr Skene is unable to determine as to whether this sept was the remains of the old Celtic inhabitants of the province or a Gaelic clan introduced into it when the *toshach* became earl: he thinks it not impossible that it may have been a northern clan that followed Macbeth when he subjugated the southern districts; that its leader had finally rebelled, and, espousing the cause of Malcolm Canmore, maintained his own position and that of his followers under the new *régime*.⁵

Such is part of the history associated with the ancient cross of Macduff; it will be interesting now to collect what writers tell us of the cross itself.

Sir John Skene attached to it, as we have already seen, the right of girth; and it is not impossible that before the Macduff incident, along with the cross of Mugdrum, it may have been a girth cross of the ancient church of Abernethy. After the restoration of

¹ De Verbor. Sign. ad Voc., p. 215.

² Acts of Parliament, vol. i. p. 551.

³ Ibid., p. 746.

⁴ Historical Documents of Scotland, vol. i. p. 415.

⁵ Celtic Scotland, vol. iii. p. 306.

Malcolm Canmore it had a new privilege attached to it; but taking into consideration the facts, that it is not far distant from the Mugdrum cross; that both are associated with the name Macgidrin or St Adrian, the ancient Bishop of Abernethy; that the Lord of Abernethy was one of the three arbiters in the application of the law of Clan Macduff,—it is not an improbable conjecture that it was originally a girth-cross of the Celtic monastery, and had an additional and a later privilege attached to it when the ancient Abbot was represented by a great territorial lord. The matter is, of course, not to be established with certainty, but there is unquestionably some historical fact connected both with it and the Mugdrum cross as boundaries of the ancient grant of land given to the church of Abernethy, and as stated in the Pictish Chronicle as extending from “a stone at Apurfeirt [the present Aberargie] to a stone at Ceirfuill [the present Carpow, contiguous to Mugdrum], and from thence upwards to Athan,” which exactly describes the place where cross Macduff stood. I cannot help thinking that this is very near the truth; and it is to be recalled that before Newburgh was created as a parish in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the contiguous lands on the east side of the cross were called Abdie—most likely a corruption of Abthane, or Church lands. Sir James Balfour informs us that the cross was destroyed by the “Congregation” on their way from Perth to Lindores in 1559, and at that time the inscription on it was so “outworn that he who copied the samem [given to Sir James by his son] had much ado to make words of some dispersed and outworn bare characters, those remaining to view being Roman, betwixt intermingled with Saxon, as appeared to Sir James’s view.”¹

That there was an inscription on the cross seems established as a certainty. Robert Gordon of Straloch refers to “Clan MacDuffes Crosse, id est crux familiæ Macduff,” and “Extabat vetus inscriptio nunc erasa tempore.”² Of the inscription itself Sir John Skene

¹ Sibbald’s History of Fife, p. 219.

² Blaeu’s Atlas of Scotland, p. 89.

continues: "In the stanes of this cross I saw sindrie barbarous words and verses written quhilk here willingly I pretermit, and yet sum of them appearis to be conforme to this purpose: 'Propter Makgidrim et hoc oblatum, accipe smeleridem super lampade limpida labrum.'"

Sir John Skene thus gives us the evidence of an eyewitness as to an inscription on the cross; and in Sibbald's 'History of Fife' (p. 219) there is a drawing of the cross, with the socket in which it is placed, and the inscription, which is represented as extending across the transverse arms and down the obverse side of the shaft. It bears the date of 1059, and the seventh line begins—

"Et propter macgdrum. . . .
Et hoc oblatum
Accipe.
Smeleridem super limpada lampada
Labrum."

The reading of the inscription, as given by Sibbald and "approved" by Sir James Balfour, was—

"Maldraradum dragos, mairia, laghslita, largos,
Spalando spados, sive nig fig knighthite gnaros
Lothea leudiscos laricingen lairia liscos
Et colovurtos sic fit tibi bursia burtus
Exitus, et bladadrum sive lim sive lam sive labrum
Propter Magridin et hoc oblatum,
Accipe smeleridem super limthide lamthida labrum."¹

Sir James Dalrmyple gives another version, procured from "one Douglas in Newburgh, near to Cross Macduff," in his second edition of Camden's 'Description of Scotland' (pp. 134, 135):—

"Ara, urget lex quos, lare egentis atria lis, quos,
Hoc qui laboras, hæc fit tibi pactis portus,
Mille reum drachmas mulctam de largior agris
Spes tantum pacis cum nex fit a nepote natis
Propter Macgidrum, et hoc oblatum accipe semel
Hæredum, super lymphato lapide labem."

¹ History of Fife, pp. 220, 221.

Cunningham, in his essay on the "Inscription upon Macduff's Cross," paraphrases the first of the above complete inscriptions thus :—

Ye Earl of Fyfe, receive for your services, as my lieutenant by right of this regality, large measures of victual or corn, for the transgressions of the laws, as well from those as want or put away their weapons of warfare, as of such as stays away from, or refuses to come to the host, or those that raises frays or disturbances therein, or from such as keep, haunt, and frequent unlawful convocations : together with all amerciements due to me, for the slaughter of a free liege, or for robbery and theft, or for adultery and fornication within your bounds, with the unlaws of fugitives, and the penalties due by such cowards as desert the host, or run away from their collours : thus shall your ganis be the greater. And yet further, to witness my kindness, I remit to those of your own kindred all issues of wounds, be it of limb, lithe, or life, in swa far as for this offering (to wit, of nine kyne and a queyoch) they shall be indemnified for limb, lithe, or life.¹

The following translation of Sir James Dalrymple's version is given by Mr Wood :—

An altar for those whom law pursues, a hall for those whom strife pursues, to thee this paction becomes a harbour. But there is hope of peace only when the murder has been committed by those born of my grandsire. I set free the accused, a fine of a thousand drachmas from his lands. On account of Magridin and his offering take once for all the cleaning of my heirs beneath this stone filled with water.²

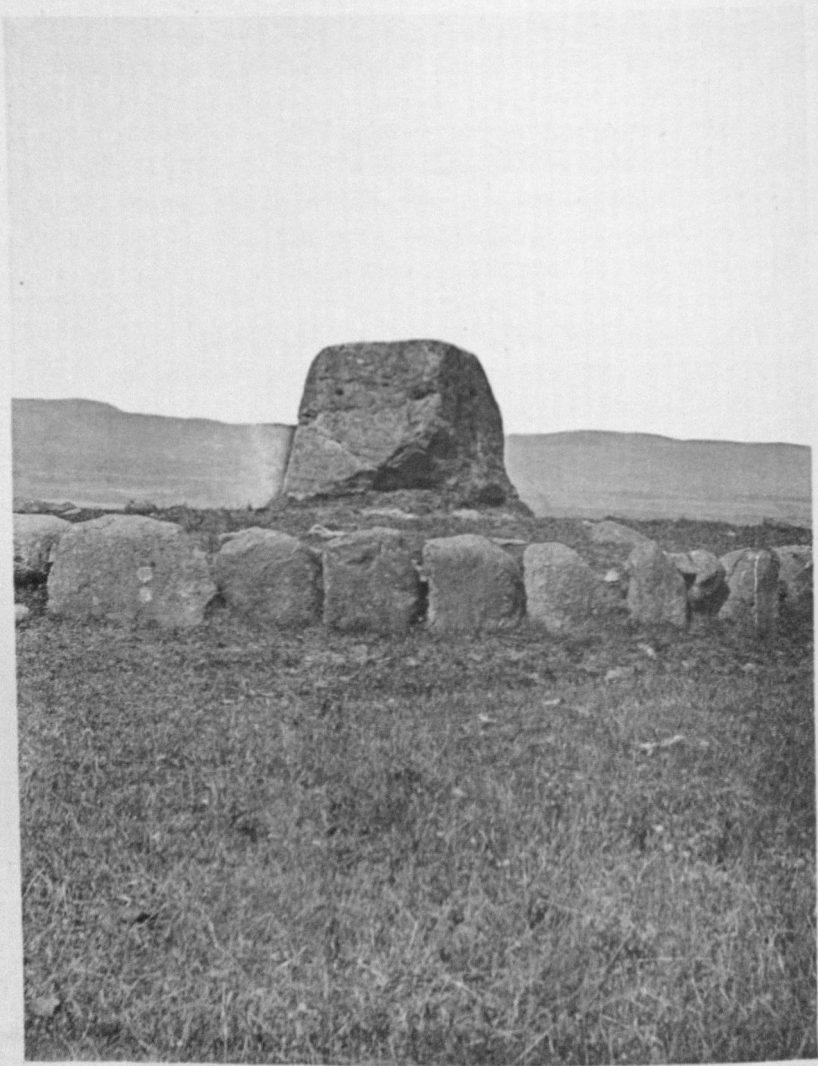
Dr Stuart rightly says : "It is impossible to believe that a monument with any such inscription could have been erected in Celtic Scotland in the middle of the eleventh century, or that any such gibberish was sculptured on a cross at a later time."³

There seems, however, no satisfactory reason to doubt that there was an inscription, and that the version of it given by Sir John Skene, and included, almost wholly, in the one "approved

¹ See reprint of Essay in 'Tracts of Ancient History,' Edinburgh, 1836, pp. 273, 274.

² East Neuk of Fife, p. 14.

³ Appendix to Preface on Sculptured Stones, vol. ii. p. lxxii.



Pedestal of Ancient Marduff Cross.

by Sir James Balfour," and the other procured from "one Douglas in Newburgh, near to Cross Macduff," is historical. We seem to be within the range of certainty in accepting it as, or very nearly as—

"Propter Magridin et hoc oblatum,
Accipe smeleridem super limthide lamthida labrum."

The law of Clan Macduff certainly conferred upon the Earl of Fife the right to repledge his kinsmen to his own court, and exonerate them on the payment of a fine specified according to their station; but the term "propter Magridin" brings before us a religious aspect, and shows that the law had a religious as well as a civil sanction. I agree unreservedly with Dr Stuart when he says—

It is not said that the fine was payable to the injured party, and the words seen by Sir John Skene rather imply that it was offered to St Magriden. This would require us to suppose that the privilege had a religious as well as a civil sanction, and that with the right of regality there was combined a right of girth, which was attached to Cross Macduff. And when we remember the general secularisation of the early monasteries—that Ethelred, the first known Earl of Fife, was also Abbot of Dunkeld, while the second, Constantine, was "magnus judex in Scotia," and that tradition represents Macduff to have been the progenitor as well of the Macintoshes as of the Abernethys, both of them families of spiritual descent—we need not be surprised at such a combination, or refuse to believe that the first Macduff may have represented a line of ancient abbots, on whom a privilege of girth had been conferred.¹

The cross itself disappeared, probably at the Reformation Period, but the pedestal of it still remains in its original site. It is of white sandstone—the same kind of stone as that which was used in the construction of the Mugdrum cross and the building of the Abernethy tower. The nearest spot from which this stone can be had is the Lomond Hill, about eight miles distant, as has been already indicated, and with the Ochill Hills intervening. Nodules are visible

¹ Appendix to Preface on Sculptured Stones, vol. ii. p. lxxii.

over the stone to-day, and tradition asserts these were originally nine in number, and contained nine iron staples and rings to which the cows payable to St Magriddon were fastened. It was also asserted that the culprits had to wash nine times in the adjacent springs, called the Nine Wells, before they were exonerated.

Taking all the facts of the case into consideration, and recalling (1) that both the Macduff cross and the Mugdrum cross are associated with the name of St Adrian, who was most likely one of the three early bishops of Abernethy; (2) that the round tower of Abernethy was most probably erected after his martyrdom by the Danes; (3) that all the three are constructed of the same stone; (4) that the Mugdrum and Macduff crosses were contiguous to Abdie (a corruption of Abden or Abthane, the name given to the old Celtic Church lands), it seems to be the true explanation to say (1) that the Mugdrum cross, Macduff cross, and round tower all belong to approximately the same period; (2) that the crosses were the limit of the Abernethy girth on the east side of the ancient monastery; (3) that there was some early kinship between the lay abbots of Abernethy and the early Earls of Fife;¹ (4) that during the time of Queen Margaret and Malcolm Canmore one of these crosses, while still retaining its religious privilege, had a civil privilege attached to it, or lost its religious privilege latterly through its association with a civil right.

The civil history is thus set forth by Sir Walter Scott:—

“ Know then, when fell Macbeth beneath the arm
Of the predestined knight, unborn of woman,
Three boons the victor ask'd, and thrice did Malcolm,
Stooping the sceptre by the Thane restored,
Assent to his request. And hence the rule,
That first when Scotland's king assumes the crown,

¹ The Abernethies of Abernethy were most probably the early Earls of Fife, and this gives a satisfactory explanation of the law of Clan Macduff being associated with the early cross in this parish, and also of the Lord of Abernethy being one of its three arbiters.

Macduff's descendant rings his brow with it,
And hence when Scotland's king calls forth his host,
Macduff's descendant leads the van in battle ;
And last, in guerdon of the crown restored,
Red with the blood of the usurping tyrant,
The right was granted in succeeding time,
That if a kinsman of the Thane of Fife
Commit a slaughter on a sudden impulse
And fly for refuge to this Cross Macduff,
For the Thane's sake he shall find sanctuary :
For here must the avenger's step be staid,
And here the panting homicide find safety."

Note.—See 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,' 1894-95 (pp. 244-251), for paper on a recently discovered stone by the Right Hon. the Earl of Southesk, K.T., LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ABERNETHIES OF ABERNETHY.

WE have now finished the history of the Celtic Church at Abernethy, and have seen that the Culdee monastery became a priory of Canons Regular or Austin canons, while the parish church was served by a vicar from Arbroath. We have also considered and classified the sculptured stones that for the most part belong to the Celtic Period. The subsequent history of the parish is interwoven with that of two great territorial and historical families—the Abernethies of Abernethy and the Earls of Angus. Abernethy passed into the possession of the Angus family by the marriage of Margaret, eldest daughter of Sir Alexander de Abernethy, with Thomas, second Earl of Angus, about 1329, but the history of the Abernethies of Abernethy is so closely allied with that of the parish previous to this marriage that we propose giving a sketch of them, in so far as information can be gathered about the outstanding members from the ancient annals of the country.

The origin of the Abernethies is lost in antiquity, and Lord Saltoun considers them not to belong to the Saxon or Norman immigrants, who at various periods entered Scotland, but as descendants from some ancient Pictish or Scottish source, or from some early and adventurous Scandinavian settlers from the north.¹ Most likely they were of ancient Pictish blood, and were descended

¹ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 1.

from the "plebilis progenies," or family within the tribe in whom the tenancy of the Church lands was vested, who possessed a regular succession, and appointed from its numbers certain coärbs or successors to the first abbot. In the twelfth century this family emerges as the lay abbots of the Culdee Monastery of Abernethy, as we have already seen: its members exercise great territorial rights, and become the Lords of Abernethy.

These lay abbots [says Lord Saltoun] in some cases may have sprung from churchmen of that rank, who in the general disorder had continued to transmit the authority they held over their monasteries and Church lands to their descendants; but it is more probable that in the majority of these cases some neighbouring noble or powerful person had originally farmed the abthania of each monastery, as a vassal of the Church, and that his posterity, acquiring power as the Church lost it, threw off that subjection and held the lands without any further connection with the Church than the title of abbot, which they adopted or received on account of their possession of an abthania, or any clerical duty except that of providing for divine service in the churches and chapels attached to the abthania, for the performance of which they paid the priors and colleges of Culdee priests out of its revenues.¹

It is probably in this manner that the Lords of Abernethy arose. They may have possessed other properties, but it is unquestionably the case that they acquired their title from their possession of the Church lands and the patronage they exercised in the appointment of the priests. When Abernethy ceased to be the civil capital of Pictland;² when Forteviot and Scone received the civil importance which it had lost through reasons indicated in former chapters; when the royal residence was removed first to

¹ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 4.

² The old chronicles are generally too much taken up with the outward events of lives, and we get very few glimpses of the heart and soul of the early kings. The following is an exception, and has a reference to a good prince who lived at Abernethy, and although quaint, is most interesting: "Eugenius the sevinth of that name, broder to Amberke [who died 698 A.D.], regnit sevintene zeir. He was the first prince that causit wailzeand deidis of nobillmen to be putt in memory. He deceissit att Abernethy and was buryit in Ycolmckill" (Iona).—Wyntoun's *Brevis Cronica* (Skene's edition), vol. iii. p. 325.

Forteviot and then to Scone,—the royal authority of former days was evidently represented by a great lay family, that exercised no inconsiderable influence on the early history of the country. Not unlikely they were connected with the royal house of the time, and received royal grants of the lands belonging to the early Church, and privileges which only the king could bestow. At any rate, royal sanction may have ratified what passed into their possession amid the ecclesiastical disorders of those early days.

In the last chapter we have seen that the Lord of Abernethy, the Earl of Fife, and the priest of Wedale were the three supreme judges in connection with the law of Clan Macduff: some close blood connection seems to have existed between the Lord of Abernethy and the Earl of Fife, for the armorial bearings of the two families support this relationship. Those of the Earl of Fife were Or, a lion rampant, gules; those of the Abernethies were the same, with the addition of a bend dexter sable, evidently assumed as a difference.¹ It is more than a probable conjecture that originally they were one and the same family.²

The first of these lay abbots or Lords of Abernethy whose names are preserved for us in historical documents—there being probably many before him—was

HUGH. He lived during the reign of Alexander I., David I., and Malcolm the Maiden, and died about the middle of the twelfth century.

The next we hear of is ORM DE ABERNETHY, who is also called Orm, the son of Hugh. He was a man of wealth and influence during two reigns—those of Malcolm IV. and William the Lion.³ He was most probably born during the first half of the twelfth century, for he appears as a witness to the charter by

¹ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 9.

² See last chapter.

³ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 10.

Ernulphus or Arnold, Bishop of St Andrews, which must have been granted before 1164,¹ as Herbert, Bishop of Glasgow, who was another witness, died in that year.²

He is said to have received a charter of confirmation of the lands of Glendroggyn and Balmadethyn from King William the Lion:³ he had acquired these lands from Duncan, Earl of Fife, in exchange for those of Balbrennin: the charter of confirmation is witnessed by Nicol, Chancellor of Scotland, who flourished A.D. 1165-71.⁴

Orm de Abernethy died between 1180 and 1190, leaving a son, Laurence, who succeeded him, and a daughter, said to have been married to Henry Rule of Balmerino.⁵

Sir LAURENCE DE ABERNETHY is the third we read about: he was probably born between 1160-70, and styled himself Laurentius filius Orm de Abernethy: as such he appears in the Arbroath charter already referred to (p. 207), and as such he is designated as a witness in a charter that relates to the Culdees of St Andrews.⁶

It was during his time that the title of "lay abbot" disappeared—between 1189 and 1199.⁷ He conveyed to the abbey and monks of Arbroath his whole right in the advowson of the church of Abernethy with its pertinents, and half of all the tithes which belonged to him and his heirs, and styled himself lord of the lordship or manor of Abernethy; and while granting to Arbroath his privileges of abbot, he retains the land and becomes a great secular lord, the head of the baronial house of Abernethy (p. 215).

This document proves the identity of the lay abbot and Laurence of Abernethy, and Lord Saltoun thinks "that it is upon him, and

¹ Reg. Prior. St Andrews, p. 130.

³ Douglas Peerage.

⁵ Douglas Peerage.

⁷ Reg. Vet. de Aberbrothoc, p. 26.

² Chron. of Melrose, p. 79.

⁴ Reg. Prior. St Andrews, p. 130.

⁶ Reg. Prior. St Andrews, p. 318.

not upon the Culdees, that the reforming hand of King William seems to have fallen most heavily, for the latter appears to have had a great portion, if not all, of the emoluments they were accustomed to receive reserved for them; and it seems to have been the part which the lay abbot was in the habit of appropriating to himself that he was then obliged to surrender to the Monastery of Arbroath, together with the advowson of the church and its attendant chapels.”¹

This may help to explain the attitude of hostility which the Lords of Abernethy assumed towards the Scottish kings, and the sympathy they extended towards the English side, as well as the espousal of the cause of Edward I., which they publicly avowed; but what has specially to be emphasised at present is, that the lay abbot was not deprived of the dominium or lordship which he possessed as abbot, but retained his position as Dominus or Lord of Abernethy. Wyntoun in his ‘Cronykil of Scotland’ refers to him thus:—

“Schyre Laurens als off Abbyrnethy,
That wes a stowt knyght and hardy.”²

The names of Laurentius de Abernethy and Devorguile his wife are recorded as visitors to St Cuthbert’s shrine at Durham early in the thirteenth century.³ Laurence’s name also occurs in the register. As to the family of which his lady was a member no definite information can now be had.

His position in the kingdom seems to have been one of great influence and importance, for in 1244 he accompanied his sovereign to the meeting with Henry III. of England at York, and was one of the barons that swore to the observance of the peace there concluded between the two kings.⁴

He died not long after this, and was succeeded by his son

¹ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 12.

² Bk. viii. ch. 36.

³ Rymer’s *Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 428.

⁴ *Ut supra*, and Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 17.

Patrick, who appears in the 'Liber Vitæ' of Durham, five places below the second entry of his father's name, as Patricius filius Laurentii.

4. PATRICK DE ABERNETHY. His name appears in the Register of St Andrews,¹ which proves him to be the son and heir of Sir Laurence of Abernethy. It is supposed that he may have died before his father, or that the great age to which his father attained, and the vigour which he seems to have retained throughout his life, must have tended to keep the son in the background and prevent his name appearing in historical records.²

He died before 1257 and left several children³—

- (1) Hugh, who appears as head of the family in 1257;
- (2) William, who acquired the lands of Saltoun in Lothian;
- (3) Marjory, who married in 1259 Hugh, son and heir of Sir William de Douglas; and perhaps
- (4) Henry, who witnesses a charter.⁴

5. Sir HUGH DE ABERNETHY comes prominently into notice during the national affairs of his period, and played an important part in them.

After the accession of Alexander III. (then a boy of eight years), Walter Comyn, Earl of Menteith, Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan, William, Earl of Mar, and Robert de Ross were appointed his councillors,⁵ through the influence of Henry III. of England, whose daughter the king married, and who was thus interested in the affairs of Scotland. In a few years, however, they were deprived of their office, at the advice of Henry, on account of their tyranny and corruption, while Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld, was appointed Chancellor, David de Lindsay Chamberlain, and Allan Durward High Justiciary, for seven years.

¹ P. 268.

² Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 17.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Reg. Prior. St Andrews, p. 268.

⁵ Fordun, Gesta Annalia, l. lvi.

The former councillors were several times summoned to trial before the king and his new councillors, but refused to appear, and took up opposition to the new councillors. The Earls of Menteith, Buchan, and Mar, with John Comyn, David de Lochore, Hugh de Berkeley, Hugh de Abernethy, and others, surprised the young king at Kinross during the night, and carried him away to Stirling on the 29th of October 1257; they also snatched by force the Great Seal from the custody of William de Stutewill, Dean of Dunkeld. It appears, however, that the young king was not an unwilling captive, for when he came of age the Earls of Mar and Buchan were appointed to positions of honour, while Hugh de Abernethy was one of the Magnates Scotiæ appointed in 1260, who in the event of the absence or the death of Alexander III. were to receive the child of his queen Margaret, whose accouchement was arranged by treaty to take place at her father's Court.¹

Upon the death of Alexander III. in 1285 a regency was formed to govern the kingdom until the arrival of his heir, the Maid of Norway; and Duncan, Earl of Fife, was appointed one of the six guardians in whose hands the power of regency was intrusted. It was a sad time for Scotland, and Wyntoun says of it with touching pathos—

“Quhen Alysander, our Kyng, wes dede
That Scotland led in lue and le,
Away wes sons of ale and brede,
Of wyne and wax, of gamyn and gle.
Oure gold wes changyd into lede.
Cryst, born in-to virgynyte,
Succour Scotland, and remede,
That stad is in perplexyte.”²

It was a time of great social disorder and lawlessness, and three years after the death of the king, the regent, Earl of Fife, was way-laid and murdered at Petpollock [Pittelloch] by Sir Patrick de Abernethy and Sir Walter de Percy, instigated by Sir William

¹ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 19.

² Wyntoun, vol. i. p. 399.

de Abernethy, who guarded another road along which the earl might possibly pass.

As these events are closely connected with the history of the Abernethy family, we give here the accounts of Wyntoun and Fordun, which are both independent and agree in main features. Wyntoun's statement is:—

“A thowsand and twa hundyr yhere
Four scor and aucht, to rekyn clere,
Efftyr the [blest] Natyvyté,
That wes the matere off our gle,
Schyre Patryk off Abbyrnethy,
And Schyre Waltyr de Percy,
Be consalle off Schyr Willame
Off Abbyrnethy, quharfore he blame
Bare rycht gret, for that thai
In to prywy buschement lay
Wayland the Erle off Fyffe Duncane,
That swne wes off the Erle Colbane;
The wayis thai kepyt sa stratly
That he mycht na way get thaim by.
At Petpolloch thir knychtis twa,
Schyr Patryk and Schyr Waltyr, tha
Forsayd, slew this Erle off Fyffe.
Quhen thai fra hym had tane the lyff,
Owt off the land thai wald haue past.
Schyre Andrewe Murraue alsa fast
Folowyd on in gret bataille
Till Colbane-town in Clyddysdale:
Thare tuk he Waltyr, and twa sqwyerys,
That in that slauchtyr ware wyth hym feris.
Thai thre thare he put to dede,
And Schyre Willame, but remede,
In to the Castelle off Dowglas,
He gert hald hym, quhill dede he was.
Patryk for drede off this chans
Fled off Scotland in to Frans;
Thare he bade till hys endyng,
This wengeans folowyd off that thyng.”¹

¹ Bk. viii. ch. ix., edited by David Laing, pp. 323, 324.

Fordun, on the other hand, gives a fuller account of the events already referred to. He says :—

Walter Comyn, Earl of Menteith, and his accomplices were more than once summoned before the king and his councillors upon many grave charges, but they did not appear. But as they durst not await their trial according to the statutes of the kingdom, they took counsel together, and with one accord seized the king by night, while he was asleep in bed at Kinross, and, before dawn, carried him off with them to Strivilyn [Stirling] the day after that of Saint Simon and Saint Jude, in the year 1257. They also took by force the great seal, which was held by Master Robert Stute-will, Deacon of Dunkeld, and vice-chancellor to Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld. The ringleaders in this kidnapping were Walter Comyn, Earl of Menteith; Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan; William, Earl of Mar, a man of great shrewdness in evil deeds; John Comyn, a man prone to robbery and rashness; Hugh of Abernethy; David of Lochore; Hugh of Barclay; and a great many other hangers-on of these disaffected men, who did all as they pleased, and naught as was lawful, and reigned over the people, right or wrong. And thus the last going astray was worse than the first. Thenceforth there arose much prosecution and distress among the Scots lords; because the king's later advisers strove to pay back to the former ones the evils and losses they themselves had erst undergone. Whereupon there followed such grinding of the poor and robbing of churches as have not been seen in Scotland in our day.¹

Referring to the subsequent murder of the regent, Earl of Fife, Fordun says :—

On the 7th of April 1288, Duncan, Earl of Fife, son of Colban, son of Malcolm, was slain at Petpolloch [Pittelloch] by Patrick of Abernethy and Walter of Percy, knights, with the advice and consent of William of Abernethy, knight, who, as had been forecasted between them, secretly lay in wait, with many men, on another road, for the passing of the said earl; so that the latter could nowise escape them alive. When they had perpetrated this wickedness, Andrew of Moray followed after them, seeking them, in their wretched flight with their men, through sundry places, this side of the Scottish sea, and beyond it. Two of them—namely, Walter and William—he manfully caught in a village which is called Colbanston, in Clydesdale; and he there straightway punished Walter and two squires with sentence of death, and committed William to prison for life, at

¹ Annals, ch. lviii.

Douglas Castle, in the keeping of the Lord William of Douglas. Patrick, however, fled to France, and there ended his days.¹

While we have thus the statement from Fordun and Wyntoun that William of Abernethy was imprisoned in Douglas Castle for being party to the death of the Earl of Fife, it is also most probable that Sir Hugh de Abernethy, who was the real instigator of the deed, and the head of the family, suffered a similar fate to his brother and died in prison, as nothing further is heard of him.

The wife of Sir Hugh was Mary, and as they had married in the fourth degree of kinship, their marriage was, according to Church law, illegal. A letter of Pope Martin refers to this: "*Nobilis viri Hugonis de Abernethy, quoad quarto consanguinitatis gradu delecte in Christo filie nobili mulieri Marie uxori sue attineret, matrimonium publice, in facie ecclesiæ cum ipsa contraxit.*" By a special dispensation the marriage was declared legal, and the date of this bull is 9th April 1280.²

After the death of Sir Hugh de Abernethy, which probably happened in 1288, his widow married Malise, third Earl of Stratherne; and she survived her second husband, who seems to have died before 1292; for in that year "Mary, Countess of Stratherne, who was the wife of Hugh de Abernethy," is summoned to Parliament to show cause why Alexander de Abernethy, son of Hugh de Abernethy, should not have his lands in Fife and Perth.³

Dr Skene writes an interesting paper to show that the right to Orkney and Caithness came into the Stratherne family through the marriage of Earl Malise with Mary, the widow of the Lord of Abernethy; for in 1331 we find Malise, Earl of Stratherne of that time, charged on the Chamberlain Rolls⁴ with the rents of the fourth part of Caithness, and in 1334 Malise appears as Earl of the earldom of Stratherne, Caithness, and Orkney.⁵

¹ Annals, ch. lxxxii.

² Theiner's *Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum*, p. 125.

³ Act. Parl., vi.

⁴ P. 404.

⁵ Cart. Inchaffray.

Dr Skene regards it as clear that the half of Caithness, which belonged to the Angus earls, had, like the other half, passed to two coheirs, and that the title of earl with a fourth of the earldom had gone to the Earl of Stratherne.¹

This seems to establish beyond doubt the view that Mary, wife of Hugh de Abernethy, and after his death Countess of Malise, third Earl of Stratherne, was the daughter of Magnus, son of Gillebride, the Celtic Earl of Angus, who was called Earl of Caithness.

Such a marriage shows the influence which the Lord of Abernethy exercised, and the importance of the lordship in those days. It also shows that there was a connection with the Angus family prior to the marriage of Margaret, daughter of Sir Alexander de Abernethy, with John Stewart, Earl of Angus, in 1329.

6. Sir ALEXANDER DE ABERNETHY succeeded Sir Hugh, his father, in the lordship. He was born after 1272; for in John Baliol's Parliament, held in 1293, the lands of Alexander de Abernethy were held in custody and ward by Alexander de Men-teith until he should come of age. Whether he was the son of the above-mentioned Mary, or of a former wife of Sir Hugh, cannot be ascertained.²

In 1301 he appears on the side of Scottish independence, but he very soon deserted that party and became liegeman to Edward I., who trusted him as one of his strongest allies. He did not join Sir Robert Bruce when in 1306 he asserted his right to the Scottish throne, but espoused the English side.³

¹ Proceedings for 1877-78, pp. 573-576.

² Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 22.

³ During the time of Wallace the opposition was evidently keen. The "battle of Irnsyde" or Earnside was, according to Blair ('Relations'), fought on 12th June 1298, when "the guardian of the kingdom [Wallace] vanquished the English in battle at Ironside in Fife, with their general and leader, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke." Dr Laing in his interesting book (p. 87) identifies this as a spot in the neighbourhood of Lindores Abbey. The English, in pursuit of Wallace, "spent the night" at Abernethy,

That Sir Alexander of Abernethy became liegeman to Edward I.¹ appears from the following letter, written from Kinghorn, 3rd March 1304:—

The King to Sir Alexander de Abernithyn greeting.

We have carefully read your letters, by which you have informed us how you are remaining to watch the people on the river Forth, which pleases us much. And therefore we order you to employ all your pains therein, and all the diligence possible, and send to William Bysset, our Sheriff of Clackmannan, to assist the said watch if you see it to be necessary. For it is our wish that neither for the Parliament, nor for any other business, you should leave the country where you are until you have sent us further news of those parts, and until we have sent you back our pleasure thereupon.

And in reply to the matter, wherein you have asked us to let you know whether it is our pleasure that you should hold out to William le Waleys any words of peace, know this, that it is not our pleasure by any means that, either to him or to any other of his company, you hold out any word of peace, unless they place themselves absolutely and in all things at our will, without any exception whatever.²

In a letter, again, from Edward I. to the Prince of Wales, dated Wemyss, 5th March 1304, the Prince is ordered without delay to “reinforce the company of Sir Alexander d’Abernithy, and of our other good people who are employed in keeping the fords and the passages toward Dripp and those parts; . . . for if the company of the said Alexander be well and sufficiently reinforced without

and such a fact speaks of the sympathy their claims met with from those in power here at that time. Blind Harry thus refers to it:—

“To Fyfe he [Wallace] past to wesye that cuntré,
But wrong warnyt off Inglissmen was he.
Schyr Jhon Sewart, quhen thai were passyt by,
Fra the Ochell, he sped him haistely;
Upon Wallace followit in all his mycht,
In Abyrnethy tuk luyng that first nycht.”

—P. 246.

¹ Edward I. must have passed through Abernethy on his way from Perth to the Abbey of Lindores: “The Wednesdaie to St John of Perte (St John’s Town of Perth); the Thursdaie to the Abbey of Loundos (Lindores), and taried ther the Fridaie, Seynt Lawrence daie.”—*Early Travels in Scotland*, edited by P. Hume Brown, pp. 5, 6.

² *Historical Documents of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 470.

delay, we understand, for a certainty, that we shall speedily have good news of our enemies, by the help of God.”¹

Sir Alexander was the English warden of the district of the country between the Forth and the mountains from 1303 to 1310;² in 1312 he was one of the ambassadors sent on a mission from Edward II. to Pope Clement V.³ When King Robert I. asserted his supremacy and possessed the throne, the possessions of Sir Alexander de Abernethy in Scotland were forfeited; but grants or sales of lands, made by him to Sir John Moray of Tullibardine and to Sir John de Wemyss, appear to have been allowed to stand good,⁴ and Lord Saltoun thinks he became altogether an Englishman.⁵ The last that is heard of him is in 1315, when he witnessed a charter.

The name of his wife is unknown, and he left no male issue; “but although his lands in Scotland had been forfeited and were granted to Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick,⁶ the king’s natural son, after the death of that Robert at the battle of Dupplin, the three daughters of Sir Alexander, who married Scotchmen, seem to have regained the greater part, if not the whole, of his estates, which were divided among them. . . . This fact, in conjunction with the charter of 1315 being dated at Arbroath, might infer the possibility of Sir Alexander de Abernethy having made his peace with King Robert, and returned to Scotland, but there is no record of his having done so.”⁷

Sir Alexander left three daughters, who were his coheireses:—

(1) Margaret, who married John Stewart, Earl of Angus, about 1329. After his death in 1331 she appears in numerous charters belonging to the reigns of David II. and Robert II. She had a son Thomas, second Earl of Angus, and through his daughter the

¹ *Ut supra*, p. 472.

² *Ibid.*

³ Rymer’s *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 339.

⁴ Robertson’s Index, pp. 43, 72, 158, Nos. 23, 29, 53.

⁵ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 23.

⁶ Robertson’s Index, p. 15, No. 3.

⁷ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 23.

lordship of Abernethy with other large possessions passed into the family of Douglas, Earls of Angus.¹ Her descendant, the Countess of Home, is still feudal superior of the lands around Abernethy. An effigy of Margaret Abernethy is still to be seen in St Bride's church at Douglas.²

(2) Helen, the second daughter (by some called Mary), married Sir David de Lindesay, ancestor of the Earls of Crawford, and brought as her dowry the lands of Downie in Angus; Cairney, Dunboig, and Country-hills in Fife; Chamberlain Newton in Roxburgh; and perhaps Ormiston in East Lothian.³

(3) Mary married Sir Andrew de Leslie, ancestor of the Earls of Rothes, and had Ballinbreich in Fife and other lands for her portion, while Ballinbreich was adopted as one of the minor titles of the Earls of Rothes. A younger son of this marriage was Walter de Leslie, who married Euphemia, elder daughter of William, Earl of Ross.⁴

Some confusion seems to exist about the two younger daughters, as Helen, the second daughter, is by some called Mary. Lord Saltoun thinks there were three daughters; others (*e.g.*, Dr Laing⁵) think there were only two daughters, and that Mary, the younger, married (1) Sir Andrew de Leslie in 1312, and after his death (2) Sir David de Lindesay of Crawford.

"Sir Andrew de Leslie," says Colonel Leslie, "married Mary Abernethy, one of the daughters and coheiresses of Sir Alexander Abernethy, Lord of Abernethy, who died about 1312. With his wife Sir Andrew de Leslie got the baronies of Ballinbreich in Fife-shire, Cairney in Forfar, and various other lands, and it is said Rothes in Elgin, but of this no record has been found. . . . Sir Andrew de Leslie died before 1325, as in that year Mary Abernethy, his wife, after her husband's death, married Sir David Lindsay of Crawford, ancestor of the Earls of Crawford, as is proved by a

¹ Frasers of Philorth, p. 25.

² Transactions for 1894-95, p. 337.

³ Frasers of Philorth, p. 27.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁵ Lindores Abbey, p. 95.

dispensation from Pope John XXII., which dispensation was found by Andrew Stewart in the Vatican.”¹ Whatever be the true explanation—whether Helen, the second daughter, married Sir David de Lindsay, or Mary, widow of Sir Andrew de Leslie, married Sir David de Lindsay as her second husband—the facts of the family connection remain the same in either case, and the three families descended from the Abernethy coheiresses—Douglas, Earl of Angus; Lindsay, Earl of Crawford; and Leslie, Earl of Rothes—quartered the Abernethy arms, Or, a lion gules, surmounted with a bend dexter sable.²

It is interesting to observe that the Church traditions of this family were not forgotten in their new homes, and that through their connection with Abernethy St Bride was adopted as the patron saint of the Douglas family. It is most likely that it was through the personal influence and beneficence of the Lady Margaret of Abernethy that the church of Douglas was endowed and dedicated to St Bride, the patron saint of her native parish.³ Her effigy is still to be seen in that church, and the dedication of the church of St Bride is an interesting example of the survival of early religious associations in her later home. On the other hand, David Lindsay of Glenesk, and his mother, the Lady Mary, second daughter of Alexander de Abernethy, founded a convent for Cistercian nuns at Elcho, in the neighbouring parish of Rhynd, which at that time belonged to Lord Abernethy.⁴ From charter evidence it appears that this convent continued to be a dependency of the

¹ Historical Records of the Family of Leslie, vol. i. pp. 18, 23.

² Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. p. 27.

³ Says Dr Cosmo Innes: “The church of Douglas was dedicated to St Bride, who thus became the especial patroness of the Douglasses, the saint whose help they invoked in sudden peril, by whose name they swore, on whose festival they dated their charters, before whose altars they chose their graves.”—*Origines Parochiales Scotiæ*, vol. i. p. 153. For St Bride as the patroness of the great family of Douglas see Barbour’s ‘Bruce’ (Spalding Club, p. 118).

⁴ The Rhynd and Elcho, by Rev. J. Ballingal, B.D., p. 11.

Priory of May under the abbots of Reading.¹ The nuns belonging to it went yearly to visit the church of Mugdrum on the same day when the monks of Lindores came in procession along their famous causeway.²

This convent belonged to the Cistercian order, who also had another house at St Leonards, near Perth. Bishop Forbes claims that this order brought a new reformation to the Church, and states that never perhaps has an influence so purely spiritual been brought to bear upon this world,—that it was as purely spiritual as anything on the human side of the Church can be.³

The eldest male line of the Abernethy had failed, as we have said, but the representation of the name devolved upon the descendants of William, second son of Patrick de Abernethy (see p. 255). This Sir William Abernethy became first of Saltoun.

Lord Saltoun says :—

All record of the means by which the Abernethies acquired the estate of Saltoun, in East Lothian, or of the date at which it came into their possession, has unfortunately perished. But they appear to have held it before the time of this Sir William Abernethy ; and he probably obtained it, as well as Glencorse (which had belonged to his elder brother, Hugh) and Ulkestone or Ugistone, in Berwickshire, as his appanage. In the beginning of the twelfth century Saltoun was part of the vast estate of the powerful family of Morville, and probably the Abernethies⁴ were their vassals for it, but in the process of time freed themselves from the superiority of that family or of their successors, the Lords of Galloway, and held it as tenants-in-chief of the Crown by the middle of the thirteenth century. Contiguous to Saltoun lies the estate of Ormiston, and it is probable that the estate took its name from the Orm de Abernethy of 1164-90, both from the contiguity of the property to that of Saltoun, and from

¹ Records of the Priory of the Isle of May, edited by John Stuart, LL.D., p. xii.

² Walcott's *Scoti-Monasticon*, p. 378.

³ *Calendars of the Scottish Saints*, p. 268.

⁴ Among the names of those killed at the battle of Berwick (1333) occurs that of Dominus Willelmus Abrenethy (*Chronicon Henrici Knighton*, edited by J. R. Lumby, D.D., vol. i, p. 469).

its having passed, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, into the hands of the Lindesays, who, by a marriage with a daughter and coheirss of Sir Alexander de Abernethy, inherited many of the family estates.¹

The Abernethies thus became the Abernethies of Saltoun, Lords Saltoun, and the last of the name Abernethy was Alexander, ninth Lord Saltoun (1611-1668). He left no issue, and the chief male line of the ancient house of Abernethy became extinct at his death: although cadet families of the name flourished for several subsequent generations, they have all lost their estates or failed in the male line, and the name as such is no longer borne by any outstanding family in Scotland.²

¹ Frasers of Philorth, vol. ii. pp. 28, 29.

² Ibid., p. 73; Douglas Book, ii. 10, 11.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE EARLS OF ANGUS AND ABERNETHY—CHARTERS—
PRIORY AND COLLEGIATE CHURCH.

THE history of Abernethy is closely connected with that of the great Angus family, and it will now be our endeavour to gather together its annals, as they are preserved for us in historical documents.

I. Sir JOHN STEWART of Boncle, son of Sir Alexander Stewart of Boncle and grandson of Sir John Stewart of Boncle, who was son of Alexander, High Stewart of Scotland, in the time of King Alexander III., was created Earl of Angus by King Robert the Bruce in 1327. He married in 1329 Margaret, eldest daughter and coheiress of Sir Alexander de Abernethy, and through this marriage the lordship of Abernethy and other lands passed into the possession of the Earls of Angus.¹

Stewart is the French form of spelling the name, and, according to Andrew Stuart, may have been adopted by those branches of the family who had distinguished themselves in France.²

1329-1332. In a charter granted by John Stewart, Earl of Angus, of this date, he is designed Lord of Bonkyl and Abernethy.³

¹ Andrew Stuart, *History of the Stewarts*, pp. 54, 55; *Douglas Peerage*, i. 15; *The Douglas Book*, ii. 10, 11.

² *Genealogical History of the Stewarts*, p. 117.

³ *The Douglas Book*, iii. 391.

1329-1371. Charter by David II. to Margaret Abernethy, Countess of Angus, of an annual which the king has furth of Abernethy.¹

Charter by David II. to Margaret Abernethy, Countess of Angus, of £16 furth of the lands of Abernethy in liferent.²

1367. The Countess of Angus is due to Exchequer £16 per annum for Abernethy.³

1367. Do., £15.⁴

The countess had a son Thomas, and survived both her husband, who died on December 9, 1331, and her son.

2. THOMAS STEWART was an infant at the time of his father's death, but in 1353 obtained a papal dispensation for his marriage with Margaret, daughter of Sir William Sinclair of Roslin. He took a prominent part in national affairs, and was for some time Chamberlain of Scotland.⁵ Being suspected of having instigated the murder of Catherine Mortimer, he was imprisoned in the Castle of Dumbarton, where he died of the plague in 1361.⁶ He was survived by the countess and by two daughters—(1) Margaret, who succeeded to the earldom and married Thomas, thirteenth Earl of Mar and last of the old line of Mar, who died about 1374; and (2) Elizabeth, who renounced in favour of Margaret all her rights as coheir of her father, and married Sir Alexander Innerwick, ancestor of the Earls of Haddington.⁷

1358. The Sheriff of Perth accounts for £48 "per redditum assise de Abernethyn."⁸

Do. of £40 of annual rent of Abernethy for the three-first

¹ Robertson's Index of Charters, p. 33, No. 44. See also pp. 52, 58, 61, 65, 66, 73, 114, 120, 125.

² Ibid., p. 6, No. 6.

³ Acts of Parl. of Scotland, i. 528.

⁴ Ibid., i. 530.

⁵ Exchequer Rolls, ii. 1.

⁶ Ibid., ii. 115, 168.

⁷ Stuart's History of the Stewarts, 57; Douglas Peerage, i. 62, 66; The Douglas Book, ii. 11, 12.

⁸ Exchequer Rolls, i. 553.

terms of his account, which are in the hands of the Countess of Angus by grant from the king, as to which inquiry was to be made.¹

1373, December 25. Charter by Robert II. to James Stewart, his son, and the heirs of his body,—whom failing, to his brother-uterine, John Stewart,—of the reversion of an annual duty of £16 sterling liferented by Margaret, Countess of Angus, out of the barony of Abernethy.²

In 1379 Lord Glammiss, Chamberlain of Scotland, entered in his accounts a payment of £21, 16s. 8d. to the Abbot of Arbroath in payment of a sum of money due by the king to the abbot for the lands of Abernethy.³

Do. to the abbot for the teinds of the church taken for the use of the king for the year of the account, £44.⁴

Robert III., A.D. 1390-1406. Charter of confirmation to John Stewart of Bute for an annual of 20 merks furth of the barony of Abernethy, with ane taillie, Perthshire.⁵

25th December 1391. Charter by Robert II. granting to his son James the reversion of the annual rent of £16 sterling due to the Crown from the barony of Abernethy, which was rendered by Margaret, Countess of Angus, during her lifetime. To be holden by the said James and the lawful heirs of his body,—whom failing, to the king's son, John Stewart, brother-uterine of the said James and the lawful heirs of his body,—of the king and his successors in fee and heritage.⁶

We have just had references to the right of the Abbot of Arbroath to the rents and teinds of Abernethy; about this period also we find references to the priory.

¹ Exchequer Rolls, i. 557.

² Robertson's Index of Charters, p. 135, No. 17; R. M. S., i. 117, No. 17.

³ Exchequer Rolls, ii. 621.

⁴ Ibid., iii. 31.

⁵ Robertson's Index of Charters, p. 146, No. 35.

⁶ R. M. S., i. 117, No. 17.

In 1358, in the 'Liber Insule Missarum de Inchaffray,' there appears as a witness the name of "domini Laurencii prioris de Abernethi."¹

1359, July 31. Sir Laurence Bell, provost of the collegiate church of Abernethy, appears as a witness to a charter of David to the neighbouring Abbey of Lindores.²

1394, February 2. Charter by James Delrumpill, prior of the collegiate church of Abernethy, and the canons of the same, whereby they granted to Thomas Fotheringham and his heirs and assignees, for his service and homage, the lands of Great Pottie, otherwise Knichter-pottie (within the limits specified), in the regality of Abernethy and county of Perth, which Hugh, the father of Thomas, resigned. Rendering to the college common-suit in its courts³ and 40s. of feu-ferme, and on each first entry, for ward, relief, marriage, recognition, and non-entry, the said 40s. for duplication.⁴ This charter, *inter alia*, was confirmed by King James VI. on April 11, 1586.⁵

Margaret, Countess of Angus and Mar, bore an illegitimate son, named George, to William, first Earl of Douglas, her brother-in-law, probably between 1374 and 1380, and on her resignation of the earldom of Angus on April 9, 1389,⁶ the lands and possessions of the earldom, to which was attached, *inter alia*, the lordship of Abernethy, with certain exceptions,⁷ were be-

¹ R. M. S., p. 31.

² Laing's Lindores, Appendix, p. 476.

³ "There is a maxim now that every one is equal before the law. From the twelfth to the sixteenth century the clergy were a separate caste. They made and administered their own laws. They could neither sue nor be sued in any secular court. . . . This extraordinary privilege arose out of the supposed supernatural character which was bestowed in ordination. 'Noli tangere Christos meos' ('Touch not my Christ, or my anointed,' as we translate) was construed to mean that the grasp of a constable was not to be laid on the sacred shoulders of a minister of the altar."—Lectures on the Council of Trent, by Froude, pp. 8, 9.

⁴ Great Seal Register, 1580-1593, p. 313, No. 964.

⁵ *Ut supra*.

⁶ Acts of Parliament of Scotland, i. 565.

⁷ The exceptions were the lands of Littlepoty, Petversy, and Petblay, which were given by the countess to her half-brother, Sir Walter Sinclair.

stowed upon her son by Robert III. She died before 23rd March 1417-18.¹

While under age, George, son of Margaret, received a charter of his mother's honours and estates on April 10, 1389.² This first Earl of Angus came into possession of large estates in Forfarshire, with the lordships of Abernethy in Perthshire and Boncle and Preston in Berwickshire. He also held the strong fortress of Tantallon.³

THE DOUGLAS EARLS OF ANGUS.

I. GEORGE DOUGLAS, first Earl of Angus, attained his majority apparently in 1397, and married the Princess Mary, second daughter of King Robert III., in the same year. On May 24, 1397, an indenture was entered into between King Robert III. and Margaret, Countess of Mar and Angus, for the marriage of George Douglas, Lord of Angus, son of the latter, to the king's daughter; for which marriage the king became bound to give the said George all the land that the latter had in Angus, the baronies of Abernethy and Bonkil, with the tenandries of these lordships in free regality, heritably to the said George and his spouse, and the survivors of them, and the heirs-male of their bodies; also the king's profits of the justiciary of the whole shire of Forfar; £16 of annual rent due out of the lands of Abernethy.⁴ At the battle of Homildon Hill George Douglas was captured by the English, and died of the plague when in captivity. His mother survived him for about fifteen years.

It has been supposed that there were two sons of this marriage—William, who succeeded his father, and George, who became fourth earl; but Sir William Fraser shows this to be a mistake.⁵

¹ Stuart's Hist., 58; Douglas Peerage, i. 66; The Douglas Book, ii. 16-18; Acts of Parl., 1389, c. 15, i. 565.

² The Douglas Book, ii. 541.

⁴ Ibid., iii. p. xix. 38.

³ Ibid., p. 592.

⁵ Ibid., ii. 45.

The earl left a son, William, and daughter, Elizabeth, who married, first, Alexander Forbes, afterwards Lord Forbes; and second, Sir David Hay of Yester, afterwards Lord Yester.¹

2. WILLIAM DOUGLAS, second Earl of Angus, could not have been more than four years of age when he succeeded to the title. In 1410 he was betrothed to Margaret, daughter of Sir William Hay of Yester. In 1425 a papal dispensation was obtained for their marriage, and they were married. He died in October 1437, and was survived by three sons—(1) James, who succeeded his father as third earl; (2) George, who succeeded his brother as fourth earl; (3) William, commonly called of Cluny in Fifeshire.²

In 1440 Margaret, Countess of Angus, is represented as presiding in her baronial court of Abernethy when one of her vassals, Walter, son of Nicholas, besought her to renew to him and his heirs the charter by which he held the lands of Balnecroch, and which charter had been lost during the common war. A jury having found his averments to be true, the countess confirmed the former grant.³ She was alive in 1484.

3. JAMES DOUGLAS, third Earl of Angus, succeeded his father in the earldom and other lordships in 1437, and was served heir to his father on January 11, 1438.⁴ He was betrothed to the Princess Joan, third daughter of James I. The princess was dumb, and was known in later times as the "Dumb Lady." When not more than twelve years old, the contract of marriage between the earl and her was entered into on October 18, 1440; but the earl died before September 9, 1446, unmarried, and before May 15, 1459, she became the wife of James Douglas, Lord of Dalkeith, who had been created Earl of Morton. On June 1445 the Earl

¹ Douglas Peerage, i. 432; The Douglas Book, ii. 17-23.

² Ibid., i. 433; Ibid., ii. 224, 236.

³ The Douglas Book, ii. 34, 433.

⁴ Ibid., ii. 541.

of Angus was arraigned before Parliament for adhering to the Crichton party against William, eighth Earl of Douglas, and as he failed to appear to answer the charge of rebellion preferred against him, he was forfeited unless he submitted himself within a year and a day.¹ He appears, however, to have made submission, and to have had the conditional sentence of forfeiture remitted. He was succeeded by his brother.²

4. GEORGE DOUGLAS, fourth earl, appears to have obtained possession of the earldom and dignities before September 9, 1446. In 1447 he was infeft in the lordship of Abernethy.³ He was in great favour with King James II., to whom he rendered important services, especially in the suppression of the Douglas rebellion, and for his services received a charter of Tantallon Castle in 1452, and a gift of the lordship of Douglas, dated April 8, 1457. After obtaining the latter gift, the second title of the Earl of Angus was changed from Lord Abernethy to Lord Douglas. In March 1458-59 the earl obtained a Crown charter erecting the baronial township of Abernethy into a burgh of barony with the privileges usually conferred on such burghs.⁴ By this charter King James II. made the towns of Kerrymure, Abernethy, and Douglas free burghs of barony, granting to the inhabitants power to buy and sell, have bakers, brewers, &c., a cross and a weekly market at Abernethy and Kerrymure on Monday, and at Douglas on Saturday, and yearly at Douglas and Abernethy a fair on St Bridget's feast and eight days after; and at Kerrymure on the feast of St Bartholomew and eight days after, with tolls, &c. To be held the foresaid towns in free burgage in barony, as freely as other such burghs. A precept of sasine was issued on the following day, directing Robert Graham of Auldmontrose and others to give infeftment.⁵

¹ Acts of Parl., ii. 59.

² Douglas Peerage, i. 433; The Douglas Book, ii. 37-44.

³ Great Seal Register, ix. 660.

⁴ Great Seal Register, iii. No. 670; Exchequer Rolls, 557.

⁵ Original in Douglas charter-chest; The Douglas Book, iii. 435, No. 438.

The earl was beside the king when he received his death-wound by the bursting of a cannon at the siege of Roxburgh, and was himself also wounded. He put the crown on the head of the young king, James III., and, in order to consolidate his possessions, placed them, so far as not under his immediate control, in the charge of trusted kinsmen or vassals. Abernethy was so placed; and the earl died on March 12, 1462 or 1463, and was buried at Abernethy. The earl married Isabella,¹ only daughter of Sir John Sibbald of Balgony in Fife, and was succeeded by Archibald, his eldest son.

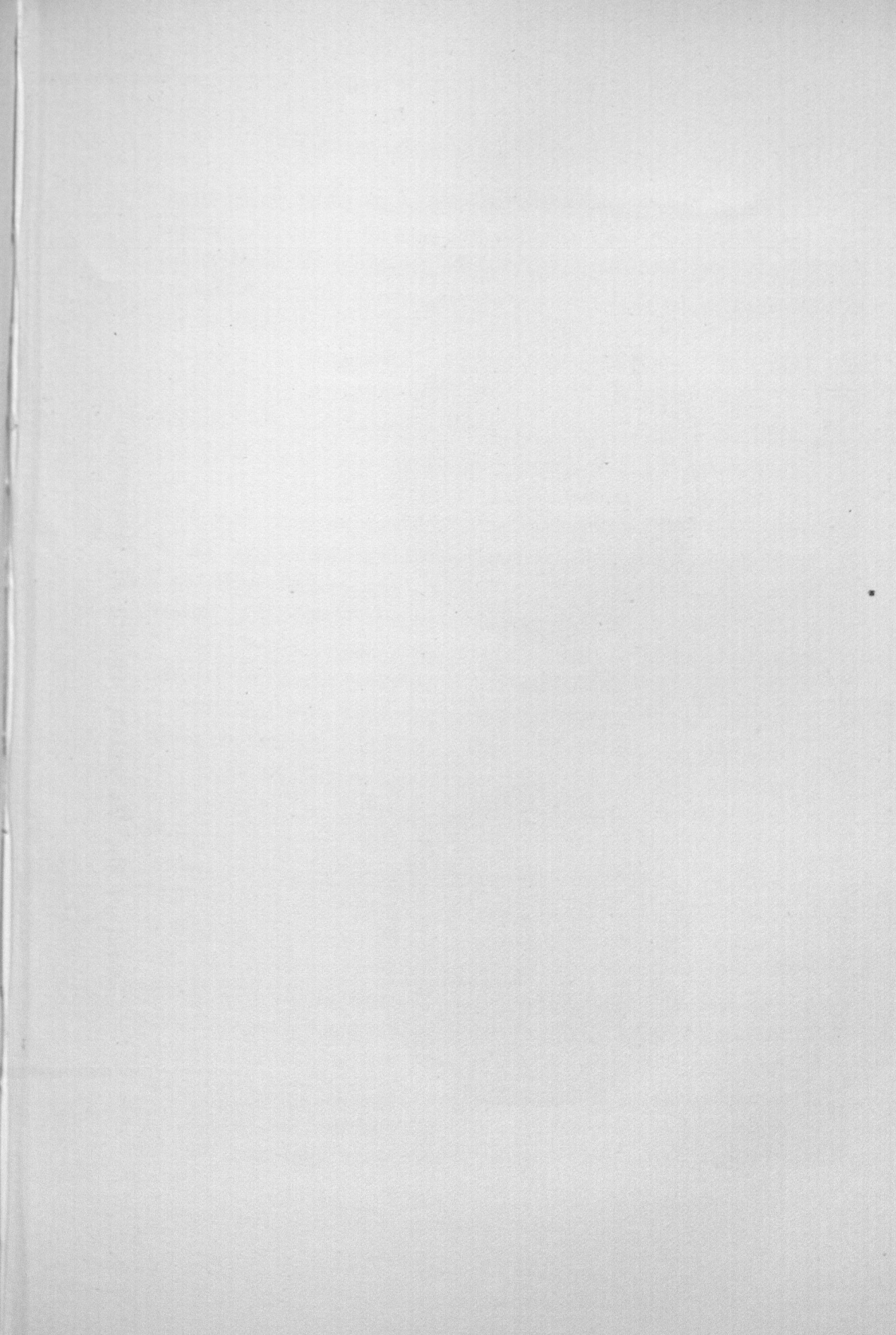
Before passing to the next earl it is interesting to recall a benefaction of George Douglas to the church of Abernethy. It was made by him a collegiate church in *c.* 1450.¹ From a charter of confirmation belonging to the reign of James VI., and another belonging to the reign of James V., we have evidence that its chapter consisted of a provost (*præpositus*) and six prebendaries. The term "collegiate church" had been applied to the priory in a general sense, as we have already seen (p. 270), but henceforth it is used in the distinctive sense of the fifteenth century.

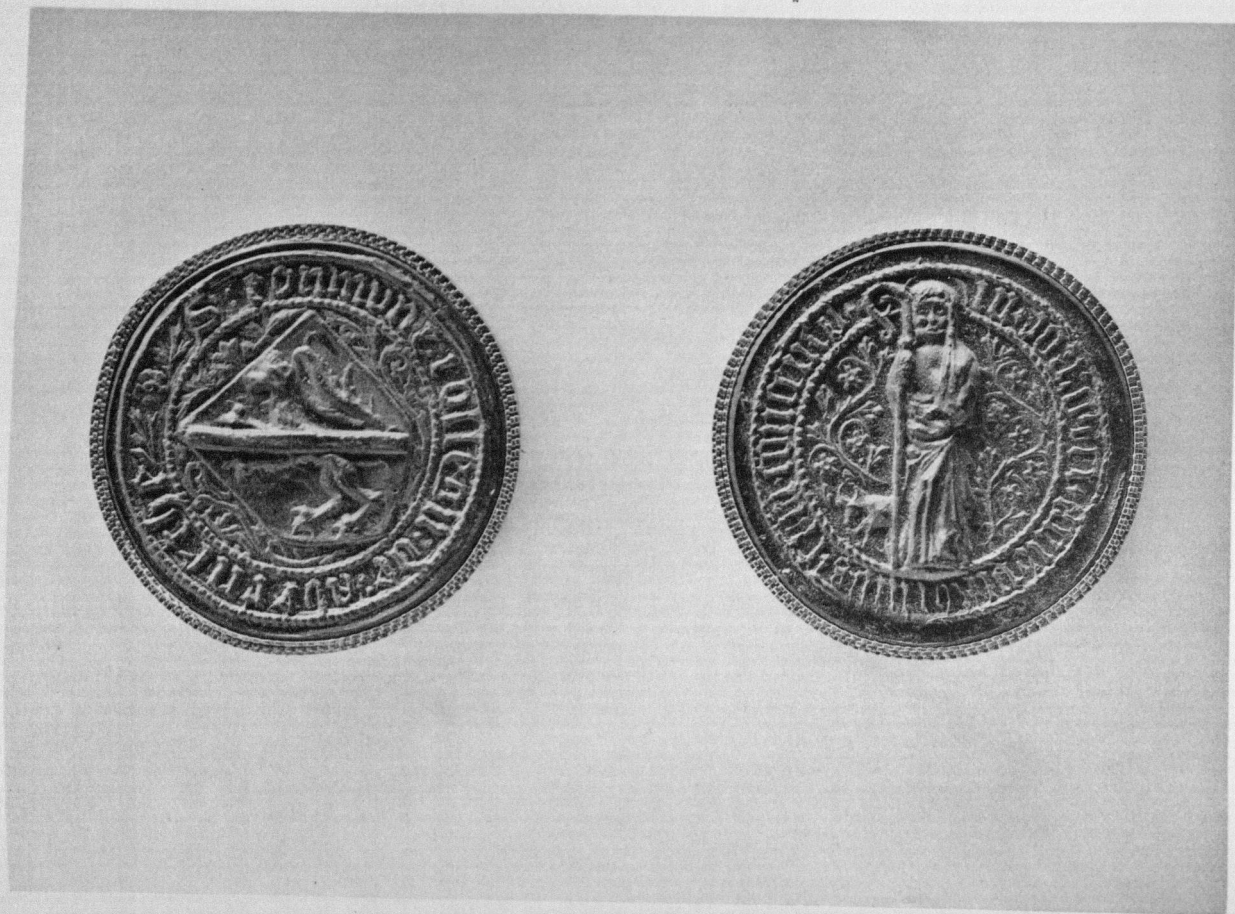
In more recent times the term "collegiate" is applied to a church where two clergymen serve the cure as colleagues, but in the fifteenth century the term had a different and wider signification. The collegiate churches, called *præposituræ*, were instituted for secular priests or canons and for choristers, and were under the jurisdiction of a provost or dean, while the service was regulated very much as in a cathedral. Each of these churches consisted of certain prebendaries or canons, where they had their stalls, and with their dean or provost made up the chapter.²

Like similar institutions of the period, this collegiate church had existed as a priory, but was now modified, enlarged, and endowed by the Earl of Angus. Beside the provost, who had his residence at the beautiful house of Cordon, with its extensive

¹ Charters of Collegiate Churches in Mid-Lothian, p. iv.

² *Ut supra*, p. iii.





Seal of the Collegiate Church of Abernethy.

orchard and home farm, still called Provost Mains, there were the prebendary of Balmanno, the prebendary of Pettinbrog, the prebendary of Pitmedden, the prebendary of Colzy and Balmanno, the prebendary of Colzy, and the prebendary of Flisk (Forevinschip), who are styled *confratres*.¹

The seal of the college is preserved in the British Museum. It is thus described by Dr Laing: (1) "A shield bearing a lion rampant debruised with a ribbon—the arms of Lord Abernethy. Foliage at the top and sides of the shield. S. Commune Collegii de Abernethy." (2) Counter-seal of the preceding. "A figure of St Bridget with the nimbus, holding a crosier in her right hand. At her feet on the right side is a cow. The background prettily ornamented with foliage. In domo Dei ambulavimus cum consensu." *Circa 1557*.² (See Plate.)

John Friselle appears in 1480 as Provost of Abernethy,³ and seems from charter evidence to have held that office until 1487.⁴

Such are some of the particular facts that can be gathered about the collegiate church of Abernethy; but as the particular cannot be understood apart from the general, nor the general apart from the particular, it may be well to inquire further into the general development of collegiate churches in the fifteenth century.

When James I. ascended the throne in 1424 the country was in a state of lawlessness, and the corruptions of the monastic system with the starved parochial organisation visible to all, and calling for reform. As far as the social condition of his people was concerned, James I. was determined to reform it. "Let God but grant me life," said he, "and there shall not be a spot in my dominion where the key shall not keep the castle, and the bracken-bush the cow, though I myself should lead the life of a dog to accomplish it." On the other hand, the king was equally zealous to reform the

¹ R. M. S., pp. 747, 748. ² Catalogue of Scottish Seals (1850), Nos. 976 and 977.

³ G. R., 1424-1513, p. 327, No. 1558.

⁴ Ibid.

Church, and in 1424-25 he addressed a letter to the abbots and priors of the Benedictine and Augustinian monasteries in Scotland, exhorting them in the bowels of Jesus Christ to shake off their torpor and sloth, to set themselves to work and restore their fallen discipline, to rekindle their decaying fervour, and thus avert the ruin that threatened their orders.¹

The creation of collegiate churches was an endeavour to reform. They arose with the purpose of counteracting the evils incidental to the monastic system. The foundation of monastic establishments terminated with the middle of the fifteenth century, and in their place arose the collegiate churches which were formed by grouping the clergy of neighbouring parishes into a corporation, or consolidating independent chaplainries.² Dr Rankin regards the motive in creating them to have been threefold: to recognise by a superior clergy the more populous or cultured parts of the country, especially near some nobleman's castle, that had no immediate benefit from a cathedral; to strengthen the secular or parochial clergy as against the regular or monastic clergy; and to promote grammar-school education. They had a chapter like the cathedrals, and the clergy were not bound to rule, like monks. As canons or prebendaries, they lived in their own houses or manses; they were presided over by a dean or provost, and the prebendaries were generally beneficed clergy holding neighbouring cures.³

The collegiate churches, then, were the evidences from within the Church itself of the need for reform,—of a desire to restore and strengthen the parochial ideal: at the same time, they speak of the liberality of the great landowners, who generally endowed them without interfering with pre-existent endowments. It was as part of this new movement that the collegiate church of Abernethy, with its provost and prebendaries, appeared; but it also attests to the beneficence of George Douglas, fourth Earl of Angus.

¹ Act. Parl. Scot., vol. ii. pp. 25, 26.

² Walcott, p. 355.

³ The Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 360.

5. ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, fifth Earl of Angus, and popularly known as "Bell-the-Cat," was probably born in 1449, and was returned heir to his father in the lordship and regality and burgh of Abernethy on April 19, 1463. In 1468 he married Elizabeth Boyd, a daughter of Robert, Lord Boyd, who at that time held the supreme control of affairs in Scotland. On May 9, 1468, this Elizabeth Boyd was infest in the lands and lordship of Abernethy, with the patronage of the churches and benefices of the said lordship as her dowry.¹

On May 21, 1468, James III. granted a charter under the Great Seal in favour of Elizabeth Boyd, wife of Archibald, Earl of Angus, in name of dot and in marriage gift, of the lands of the lordship of Abernethy, with the patronage of all the churches and benefices of the lordship, which the earl had resigned before his marriage. To be holden by the said Elizabeth during her life, and after her death by the heirs of the marriage between them; whom failing, by the earl and his nearest heirs whomsoever.²

In 1482 the incident occurred at Lauder which gave the Earl the popular name of Bell-the-Cat, and led to the imprisonment of James III. in the Castle of Edinburgh and the assumption by his brother, the Duke of Albany, of the reins of government for a time. On April 22, 1484, the Earl was at Abernethy. In 1488 he took a prominent part in the proceedings which led to a rebellion, at the head of which the king's son was nominally placed, and which ultimately resulted in the defeat of the king at Sauchieburn and his death by the hands of an assassin on June 11, 1488. Immediately after this event the earl and other insurgent nobles proclaimed his son King of Scotland, and acted for a time as the royal guardian. In consequence of the earl entering into a secret treaty with Henry VII. of England, he was committed

¹ The Douglas Book, iii. xxxv., No. 99.

² Great Seal Register, 1424-1513, No. 945; Douglas Peerage, ii. 32.

to ward in Tantallon Castle, but appears to have been speedily reconciled to the king. In 1492 he was Chancellor of the kingdom, but after he ceased to hold that office he retired into private life. On June 14, 1492, he obtained a charter of the barony and Castle of Bothwell on the resignation of Patrick, Earl of Bothwell.¹ On January 16, 1510-11, he resigned Abernethy in favour of his eldest son, George, who already held the fee of the whole Douglas and Angus estates, and on February 25, 1510-11, George, Master of Angus, had a charter of the lordship of Abernethy,² the earl only retaining a liferent interest. He, with his two sons, accompanied the king to Flodden, and advised him either to make an immediate attack on the English army under Surrey or to delay, and so force them to disband for want of supply. This advice was met by insult, and he left the king and his army, but charged his two sons to remain at the head of the Douglas vassals. He spent his later days at Lindores Abbey, and with a bitter smile used the proverb, "He that can do no better must needs be a monk."³ His two sons were slain at Flodden, and between November 29, 1513, and January 31, 1514, the earl died at St Ninians and was buried there, though his heart was interred within the church of St Bride. His third son was Gavin Douglas, Provost of St Giles, translator of Virgil's '*Æneid*,' and afterwards Bishop of Dunkeld. Before leaving the time of Archibald Douglas, fifth Earl of Angus, it will be necessary to state several facts regarding the parish as preserved for us in the charters.

In 1476 there was a charter granted by Archibald, Earl of Angus, in favour of the burgh of Abernethy, proceeding on charter of erection in his favour by King James II.⁴

In 1476 Friselle again appears as provost and William Douglas as canon of the collegiate church of Abernethy.⁵ The charter in

¹ Douglas Peerage, i. p. 7.

² Laing's Lindores, p. 113.

³ G. S. R., p. 327, No. 1560.

⁴ R. M. S., 1424-1513, pp. 761, 762, No. 3543.

⁵ The Douglas Book, ii. 541.

which this appears was granted at the manor of Abernethy by the Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas.

In 1490 £53, 16s. 10d. appears to have been paid to George Clerk, Provost of Abernethy (Friselle's successor), by the Earl of Angus, then guardian of the marches.¹

In 1509 George Douglas, Master of Angus, eldest son of Archibald, fifth earl, and father of the sixth earl, granted a charter for service rendered and to be rendered, to Peter Carmichael and Euphemia Wemyss, his wife, in conjunct fee, the lands of the Kirkdroyne, otherwise Easter Droyne, with the mill and multiner in the regality and barony of Abernethy, and to the lawful heirs of Peter and Euphemia, whom failing, to the nearest lawful heir whomsoever of Peter. Two of the witnesses to this deed was D. John Pitcairn and D. M. Geddes, chaplains and notaries.² This charter was confirmed by King James VI. on December 13, 1593.³

It may be noted that the name of Peter Carmichael appears several times in the chartulary of Arbroath as the proprietor who received a lease of the abbey lands in the parish.

In 1513 the sheriff accounted for two silver pennies as a duplication of the blench ferme of the lands of the barony of Abernethy, due to the king in respect of sasine of the lordship and barony of Archibald Douglas.⁴

6. ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, eldest son of George, Master of Angus, who fell at Flodden, succeeded his grandfather (Bell-the-Cat) between November 29, 1513, and January 31, 1514, and became sixth Earl of Angus. He was thus about twenty-five years of age. Twelve weeks after the battle of Flodden he was served heir to his father in, *inter alia*, the lands and lordship of Abernethy (November 29, 1513). On August 6, 1514, he married Margaret of England, Queen-Dowager of Scotland, who by her marriage

¹ G. S. R., x. 167.

² G. S. R., 1593-1608, p. 8, No. 23.

³ *Ut supra*.

⁴ Exchequer Rolls, Ap. Lib. Res., xiv. 523.

vacated the regency under the will of her former husband, the king. On 10th July John, Duke of Albany, who had returned from France, was declared by Parliament to be Protector till the young king reached his eighteenth year. In consequence of her rupture with the Regent, she and Angus fled to England, where she gave birth to a daughter, Margaret Douglas, on October 7, 1514. In April 1516 the queen-dowager went to London, but Angus returned to Scotland, where he was joined by the queen on June 15, 1517. A week previously Albany had gone to France, leaving the Government in the hands of Angus and five others. The earl and queen were living together in Edinburgh in July 1518, but in April 1519, probably, the queen complained to her brother, Henry VIII., that her husband had deserted her for six months. A reconciliation was effected. Subsequently various collisions took place between Angus and Arran; but on November 18, 1521, Albany returned to Scotland, and on January 29, 1522, Angus was forfeited by Parliament. Meanwhile the queen and Albany were in the closest relations of friendship. Subsequently Angus returned to Edinburgh, but was arrested by order of the Regent and sent to France. There he was received with great consideration. Meanwhile Albany was becoming very unpopular, and left Scotland in 1524, never to return. Angus, who seems to have been restrained from leaving France, managed to effect his escape to Berwick, whence he proceeded to London, and was well received by Henry VIII. He was desirous to return to Scotland, but the queen-dowager opposed this, and on July 31, 1524, the young king was "erected" to the throne. Meanwhile her action was giving offence in Scotland, and her relations with Henry Stewart, a younger son of Lord Avondale, to whom had been intrusted the keeping of the Great Seal, the Privy Seal, the Quarter Seal, and the Signet, and also the treasurership, were creating a revulsion of feeling in favour of Angus. Henry accordingly consented to Angus's return to Scotland on condition that he confirmed what had been done in raising

the young king to the throne, and fostered friendly alliance with England to the exclusion of France. He entered Scotland after some detention, and sought reconciliation with the queen, but she resisted his overtures. On November 23 Angus, with the Earl of Lennox, Glencairn (Master of), Buccleuch, and 400 horsemen entered Edinburgh while the queen was in Holyrood ; but on the following day, in obedience to a change in mind of the king, Angus retired first to Dalkeith and afterwards to Tantallon. Afterwards the dispute between Angus and the lords associated with him on the one hand, and the queen exercising the authority of the king on the other, became more intense ; but in February 1524 an arrangement was entered into, under which both parties were so far reconciled as to meet in the Parliament held at Edinburgh on the 23rd of that month. At this Parliament the articles of agreement were ratified and the forfeiture against Angus and others was cancelled. Angus and Arran being reconciled, were put in the Council, and were both in accord on public affairs. But their truce was a hollow one on the part of the queen. She endeavoured to induce Albany to return as governor, and her favourite, Henry Stewart, took refuge in Stirling. Anxious to obtain divorce from Angus, she urged him to comply with her wishes ; but as he persistently refused, she, with the aid of Albany, sued for divorce in the Court of Rome. This she obtained on March 11, 1528 ; but the earl refused to recognise it, and notwithstanding, before 2nd April, she secretly married Henry Stewart, who was in consequence committed by the king to prison for a time. In January 1526 Parliament deprived the queen of her authority, and the custody of the king was intrusted to Angus and other lords in rotation. On June 12 Parliament confirmed the Government in the hands of the king, who had attained fourteen years of age, and Angus, who had carried the king with him, established his supremacy in the country. But shortly after this Parliament rose, and the king transferred his confidence to John, Earl of Lennox, who thereupon

ceased to work in harmony with Angus. A powerful coalition was then formed, with the consent of the king, to have him relieved from the charge of Angus, and a battle took place between the opposing forces of Lennox and Angus on the one hand and Arran on the other, at Linlithgow. In this battle Lennox was slain, much to the grief of Arran, his uncle. The queen was at the time in Stirling Castle, but it surrendered to Angus, and was restored to the queen on her promise to separate from Henry Stewart, to break off from her political alliance with the Archbishop of St Andrews, and to be guided by Angus and his friends. At a meeting of Parliament in November 1526 at Edinburgh the queen attended in state. This apparent reconciliation, however, did not last long. The king refused to allow Henry Stewart to come to Court, and the queen retired in consequence to Stirling, which she had already bestowed on Stewart. In August 1526 Angus was appointed Chancellor. Towards the end of May 1528 the king escaped from the guardianship of Angus in Falkland, and rode to Stirling,¹ where he was received by the governor of the castle. The Douglasses then sought to bring him back, but were charged by a royal herald, under pain of treason, not to approach within six miles of the king. They retired in consequence to Linlithgow.

This breach between the king and Angus must have taken place between the 27th and 30th of May. On 6th July the queen and her son came to Edinburgh, and on the 9th proclamation was made that no one should communicate with the Earl of Angus and his two brothers or his uncle, and that no one pertaining to them should be found in Edinburgh or its precincts after four o'clock that afternoon, under pain of death. Angus was deposed from the

¹ Sir William Fraser points out that the story of the king's escape as given by Lindsay of Pitcottie and Buchanan is incorrect, and accepts the simple statement of Bishop Leslie (p. 140), confirmed as it is by the king himself in a letter to Henry VIII. (State Papers, Henry VIII., iv. 548, 557, &c.)

chancellorship, and ordered to betake himself north of the Spey. Parliament met on 2nd September, and the trial of the Earl of Angus, his brother George, and his uncle Archibald, was proceeded with, and they were adjudged to be forfeited in their lives, lands, and goods.¹ Angus then sought shelter in England. The lordship of Abernethy, forming part of the forfeited estate of the earl, was conferred on the Earl of Argyle.²

On September 8 all those who had participated in the Douglas lands were ordered to bring their charters to the king, to be sealed and signed. This order was obeyed, and the charters were handed to a page to keep. On the writ being asked for, James demanded of his Council if he could not revoke what he had done. The answer was affirmative, and calling for a notary the king made a formal revocation, and commanded the expectant barons to go and chase Angus out of Scotland and then they would receive their charters.³ The earl, driven thus to bay and secretly favoured by Henry, fortified himself in Tantallon and then in Coldingham, and gathering around him a considerable band of Borderers, despatched a band of eighty men towards Edinburgh and burned two villages a few miles to the south of it. The king thereupon attacked Douglas Castle, with what success is not certain, though Tytler concludes the siege was abandoned. Hostilities existed between the king and Angus, and the earl arranged with Henry and Wolsey to reside in England. To enable him to do so he was granted a pension of 1000 merks yearly, and it was arranged that Angus should reside with the Earl of Northumberland. The earl, in view of war with James, undertook to serve England, and had his allowance increased to £1000. Notwithstanding the truce between the two kings, in August 1533 James showed the most hostile feelings to the Earl of Angus, his family and friends. In December 1540 Parliament passed an Act attaching the principal baronies of the earl to the

¹ Acts of Parliament, ii. 324, 326.

² G. S. R., 1493-1546, p. 156, No. 716.

³ State Papers, Henry VIII., iv. 510, 511.

Crown, and exempted his adherents from the benefit of a general remission.¹

After the death of the king Angus returned to Scotland, was cordially welcomed, and restored with his brother to their lands and possessions on January 16, 1542-43. He and his friends received back their honours and estates, and the Earl of Arran, then regent, delivered to them the sceptre and baton in token of their restoration. This was done on March 13, 1542-43.² The lands of Angus, on the earl's forfeiture in 1528, had been distributed among the king's favourites, but they were almost entirely resumed by the king and added to the Crown patrimony.³ "The only difficulty that occurred was in reference to the barony of Abernethy, which had been granted to Colin, Earl of Argyle, and was still held by his son Archibald. This was settled in a friendly way by arbitration in the following April, though Argyle was one of the few nobles who were not altogether friendly to the return of the Douglasses.⁴ During the remainder of his life he took a leading part in politics, died at Tantallon Castle in the latter part of January 1556-57, and was buried among his ancestors at Abernethy.

These facts connected with the life of the earl cast light upon several of the charters and Acts of Parliament connected with Abernethy during his time.

(1) One of the prebends of the church of Abernethy was the church of Flisk.⁵ This prebend seems long to have been known by the name of Forevinschip. By a charter granted by James V. to George Leslie, Earl of Rothes, and his spouse, he conveyed to them on April 1, 1517, the right of patronage of this prebend.⁶

¹ Acts of Parliament, ii. 360, 361, 363.

² Ibid., iii. 413-424.

³ A. P. S., ii. 360, 361.

⁴ The Douglas Book, ii. 260; iii. 230-232.

⁵ Sir James Balfour of Pittendreich, eldest son of Balfour of Montquhanie, was appointed official of Lothian by the Archbishop of St Andrews, and still retained his ecclesiastical denomination, parson of Flisk, when raised to the bench, 12th November 1561. In 1566 he was knighted and appointed Lord Clerk Register. In 1567 he became Lord President by the title of Pittendreich.

⁶ G. S. R., 1513-46, p. 31, No. 148.

(2) On June 9, 1525, the same king ratified a charter by which Earl George of Rothes conveyed to Elizabeth Graham, Countess of Huntly, *inter alia*, the patronage of Flisk.¹

(3) On January 14, 1527, Archibald, Earl of Angus, conveyed to Peter Carmichael of Dron,² his uncle and kinsman, and Euphemia Wemyss, his spouse, and the longest liver of them, in conjunct infestment, and their heirs-male — whom failing, the heirs-male whomsoever of Peter,—the lands of Craigpotie, in the regality of Abernethy, with the office of bailie of the regality to Peter and his heirs-male, for payment to the earl of 12 merks of feu-duty. One of the witnesses to this deed was Mr Thomas Boyd, Provost of Abernethy.³

(4) This charter was confirmed by King James VI.⁴ on December 23, 1593.

(5) On December 6, 1528, King James V. granted a charter in favour of Colin, Earl of Argyle, Lord Campbell and Lorne,

¹ G. S. R., 1513-46, p. 71, No. 315.

² The name of this Peter Carmichael occurs in connection with the king's escape from Falkland and flight to Stirling. We give the story as it is narrated by Sir Walter Scott:—

“In the morning there was great alarm at Falkland. Sir George Douglas had returned thither, on the night of the king's departure, about eleven o'clock. On his arrival he inquired after the king, and was answered by the porter as well as the watchman upon guard that he was sleeping in his chamber, as he intended to hunt early in the morning. Sir George therefore retired to rest in full security. But the next morning he learned different tidings. One Peter Carmichael, bailie of Abernethy, knocked at the door of his chamber, and asked him if he knew ‘what the king was doing that morning?’

“‘He is in his chamber asleep,’ said Sir George.

“‘You are mistaken,’ answered Carmichael; ‘he passed the Bridge of Stirling this last night.’

“On hearing this Douglas started up in haste, went to the king's chamber, and knocked for admittance. When no answer was returned, he caused the door to be forced, and when he found the apartment empty, he cried, ‘Treason!—the king is gone and none knows whither.’ Then he sent post to his brother, the Earl of Angus, and despatched messengers in every direction, to seek the king, and to assemble the Douglasses.” This was on 22nd or 23rd May 1528.—‘Tales of a Grandfather,’ ch. xxvi. See also ‘Falkland, Fife,’ by Major William Wood, pp. 22-24.

³ G. S. R., 1593-1608, pp. 9, 10, No. 28.

⁴ *Ut supra*.

and his heirs, of the lands and barony of Abernethy, with the fortalice, mills, fishings, tenandries, and patronage of churches and chaplainries of the same belonging to the king by the forfeiture of Archibald, sometime Earl of Angus.¹

(6) On November 2, 1533, James V. granted another charter to Archibald, Earl of Argyle, and his heirs, of the lands, barony, regality, and lordship of Abernethy, with the mills, &c., patronage of the provostry, prebends, and all other benefices of whatever kind within the said lands which devolved on the king by the forfeiture of Archibald sometime Earl of Angus. But under reservation of the mill of Aberargie, with the lands and astricted multures of the same, to the king's familiar servants, John Tennant and his wife.²

(7) On May 20, 1536, there is a charter granted by Mr Thomas Boyd, provost of the collegiate church of Abernethy, with consent "of the prebans and cannons chapterly convened, whereby he feus out and dispones to Mr John Moncrief, parish clerk of Methven, and Isobell Tyrie, his spouse, and longest liver of them, and their heirs and assigneys, all and sundry the lands of Caldrum, with the pertinents lyeing in the parish of Methven, lordship thereof, and shire of Perth, to be holden of the said provost, paying yearly to him and his successors, prebans and cannons of Abernethy, fourty shilling Scots, at two termes in the year, Whitsunday and Martinmass, by equall portions, and provideing yearly honest and sufficient sustentation in meat and drink, and in fodder for the horses, of the cheplin, clerk, and beddall, or officers of the said church, convened on Saint Marnoch's day, patron of the collegiate kirk of Methven, at midday, to the number of eight horsemen and four footmen, who shall come the said day for singing praises and celebrating the chief mass the said day in the church of Methven, *Tantum pro omni alio onere.*" This charter contains a precept of sasine.³

¹ G. S. R., 1513-46, p. 156, No. 716.

² *Ibid.*, p. 208, No. 1318.

³ The Provostry of Methven, p. 46.

(8) On June 9, 1537, King James V. granted a third charter to Archibald, Earl of Argyle, proceeding on a narrative of the services rendered to the king in France, and in recompense in part of the great expense incurred by the earl in these parts.¹

(9) On February 9, 1540, King James V. granted a fourth charter to Archibald, Earl of Argyle, of the above lands, but further granted to him the lands of Mylncroft, with the mill, mill-lands, astricted multures of Aberargie, which had been resigned by John Tennant and Mariote Aitkinson, his wife, in favour of the earl.²

(10) On October 25, 1542, King James V. granted a charter to Archibald Campbell, son and heir-apparent of Archibald, Earl of Argyle, of the lands of Abernethy, above described, proceeding on a recognition by the earl.³

(11) The forfeiture of the Earl of Angus was reversed in 1543, and on January 20, 1545, Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus, granted a charter to James Carmichael of Balmaddy, brother-german of Peter Carmichael of Balmaddy, and his heirs and assignees, *inter alia*, the lands of Balmaddy, in the regality of Abernethy, for payment of a penny in blench ferme. These lands had been personally resigned by Peter Carmichael.⁴ This charter was confirmed by King James VI. on December 13, 1593.⁵

(12) In 1546 Lord Angus protested anent his regality of Abernethy.⁶

(13) On August 31, 1547, Queen Mary granted a charter to Archibald, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas, and his son John Douglas, in feu the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy, excepting the parish church of Abernethy, belonging to the Monastery of Arbroath.⁷ The reddendo for Abernethy in this charter was a silver penny.

¹ G. S. R., p. 372, No. 1672.

³ Ibid., p. 653, No. 2813.

⁶ Acts of Parliament, iii. 474.

² Ibid., p. 520, No. 2277.

⁴ Ibid., 1593-1608, p. 8.

⁵ *Ue supra*.

⁷ G. S. R., 1546-80, pp. 35, 36, No. 146.

7. DAVID DOUGLAS, son of Sir George Douglas of Pittendreich and nephew of Archibald, sixth earl, became seventh Earl of Angus. Previous to his succession to the earldom he was known as David Douglas of Colbrandspath, now Cockburnspath, in Berwickshire. He was born about 1515, and his younger brother James, afterwards the Regent Morton, must have been born about 1516. About four years previous to the death of his uncle, the earl, David Douglas was married to Margaret Hamilton, daughter of John Hamilton of Samuelston, a natural brother of James, Duke of Chatelherault, Governor of Scotland. Margaret was the widow of James Johnston, younger of Johnston, to whom she had a son and daughter. David Douglas died in June 1557, only six months after his accession, and was succeeded by his son Archibald, then a young child.¹

8. ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, eighth Earl of Angus, son of David the seventh earl, was born about 1555, and succeeded his father when about two years old. His uncle James, Earl of Morton, took charge of the interests of the minor, and successfully resisted the claims of Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, only daughter of Archibald, sixth earl, who on her father's death assumed the title of Angus in addition to that of Lennox. Morton also succeeded in 1559 in having the young earl returned heir and infeft in the extensive territories of his grand-uncle, the sixth earl. In 1564 Queen Mary, attaining majority, confirmed in the earl's favour the charters granted in 1547 to his grand-uncle, the sixth Earl of Angus, and his infant son James, Master of Angus.²

After various negotiations Morton succeeded in 1565 in effecting an arrangement with the Countess and Earl of Lennox and their son, Lord Darnley, and this arrangement was followed by a contract, in which they ratified the entail of the Douglas estates made by Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus, the father of the countess, in favour

¹ The Douglas Book, ii. 295, 297; Douglas Peerage, i. 438.

² Acts of Parliament, ii. 560-571.

of her son James and his own nearest lawful heirs-male, and, renouncing all the countess's claims, confirmed the title of the young earl. One condition of this arrangement, to which Queen Mary was also a party, was that both Angus and Morton should favour her marriage with Darnley, and that, failing the marriage, the contract should become void. In April 1567 an Act of Parliament was passed in which Angus was named one of the heirs in a new entail of the Morton estates, while the previous charter of his own earldom, made in 1564, was formally ratified.¹

Angus adhered faithfully to the Earl of Morton, and after Morton had been warded in the Castle of Edinburgh, took steps to rescue him while being transferred to Dumbarton. These failed, however, and about two months later Angus was ordered to ward himself north of the Spey, or at Inverness. A few days later proclamation was made at the chief burghs in the South Country, forbidding the lieges to assist Angus, who was said to have been inciting men to take arms for "purposes suspicious."² This was followed by a declaration that Angus was guilty of treason, for refusing to ward himself, and prohibiting all communication with him. He was also charged to deliver up to the king within forty-eight hours his castles of Tantallon, Cockburnspath, and Douglas.³

On December 14, 1581, King James VI. granted a charter to William, Earl of Gowrie, Lord Methven and Dirleton, his treasurer, and his heirs and assignees, the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy, with the regality thereof, which devolved on the king by the forfeiture of Archibald, sometime Earl of Angus.⁴ This action against Angus was prompted by a desire to crush the earl, and also to fortify the power of Lennox and Arran, then in the ascendant. He was also believed to be in league with the

¹ April 19, 1567, Acts of Parliament, ii. 546, 562-571.

² Privy Council Register, 18th March 1581, pp. 365, 366.

³ Ibid., 27th March 1581, pp. 367, 368.

⁴ G. S. R., 1589-93, p. 97, No. 297.

English Court, who were earnestly pressing for Morton's release. All such efforts were unavailing, and Morton was executed: a few days afterwards the movable goods of Angus were escheated, and he and his adherents were forfeited by Parliament.¹ On learning at Hawick of Morton's death, Angus, believing his own life to be in danger, fled to England, where he was hospitably received along with the sons of Morton and several of his own friends and attendants. While in England the Raid of Ruthven took place: the king was seized and a new Government inaugurated in August 1582.² Arran was thereupon placed in ward, while Lennox retired to the West Country, and ultimately left Scotland. In the end of September a formal pardon was granted Angus, who returned to Scotland, but was required to remain within the bounds of Merse and Teviotdale. In October, during a sitting of the Convention of Estates, Angus was summoned to Edinburgh; but as his forfeiture still subsisted, he could not take his seat in the Council. It was at this time that Arran was committed to ward, and Angus became bound not to pursue either Lennox or Arran for the death of his uncle, Morton, nor to claim his uncle's estates. A formal reconciliation of the king and the earl took place about the end of November, and Angus was rehabilitated in 1582. On 8th December the king granted a warrant for taking down from the Tolbooth the head of Morton, and it was buried beside his body.³

In the end of June 1583 the Gowrie Administration was overturned, and the chief actors in the Raid of Ruthven had to look to their own safety. At a personal interview with the king, Angus was desired to go quickly to his own home, and he retired to Douglas Castle for a time; but about the middle of November he was ordered to pass north of the Spey and remain there during the king's pleasure. Angus obeyed, but the administration of Arran became so odious to all classes that a conspiracy was entered into

¹ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, i. 96, 97; Acts of Parliament, iii. 197, 204.

² Calderwood, iii. 637-640.

³ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, i. 116 note.

by Angus, Mar, Glammis, and others of the Ruthven raiders to resist the action of the party then in power and to seize Stirling Castle. Information of this reached the governing party, and Glammis was seized, but in April 17, 1584, Mar and Glammis obtained possession of the castle and were there joined by Angus, while a proclamation was issued protesting against the misgovernment of Arran, and calling upon every man to assist in removing the evil counsellors of the king. On 21st April they were commanded in name of the king to surrender the castle, and levies were raised to enforce the demand. Under these circumstances Angus and his confederates returned from the castle, and took refuge in England. Angus seems then to have been forfeited, for on August 25, 1584, the king granted a charter under the Great Seal to Andrew, Earl of Rothes, and his heirs whomsoever, by which he granted to them the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy, the islands in the Tay opposite the lands of Mugdrum and Newburgh, &c., which had devolved on the king by the forfeiture of Archibald, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy; paying after the decease of Lady Margaret Leslie, Countess of Angus, 300 merks of feu-ferme. Reserving to the said Margaret her liferent right in the lordship, according to the tenor of her marriage contract.¹

Arran thus exercised supreme power. Gowrie was executed on 2nd May, and a few weeks later Parliament met and virtually overturned Presbyterianism and established Episcopacy. The banished lords had their estates forfeited the following August.² The banished lords remained in Berwick under the protection of Elizabeth, and were joined by James Melville, who established a Presbyterian congregation there. After a time the banished lords removed to Newcastle. Arran then entered into a long course of negotiation with Elizabeth to endeavour to induce her to give up the banished

¹ G. S. R., 1580-93, p. 225, No. 729.

² Calderwood, iv. 197; Acts of Parliament, iii. 323-373.

lords, whom she favoured, but without success. Ultimately a league between Scotland and England, offensive and defensive, was entered into, and Arran was imprisoned for a time, but he was speedily released and began to collect his forces. Under these circumstances Angus and his friends were "let slip" by Elizabeth and hurried to Scotland, where gathering their forces they proceeded to Stirling, where the king was with Arran, and attacked and took possession of the town, whence Arran made his escape. On the following day the king sent out a flag of truce, and being assured of his own personal safety, he caused the gates to be thrown open. Hamilton, Angus, Mar, and others had an interview with the king, and were reinstated in their former honours and possessions.¹ The restored lords at once assumed the reins of government, and for the next year and a half, till the king attained his majority, they were the acting Ministry, the Earl of Angus being then acknowledged chief. In December Parliament met, and the banished lords and the other leaders in the Raid of Ruthven were restored to their full inheritance.²

In July 1587 Parliament by a special Act ratified to the earl the lands and honours of Morton, although he did not long enjoy possession.³ The earl died at Smeaton, near Dalkeith Castle, on August 4, 1588, aged thirty-three. He was buried in Abernethy, and his heart was conveyed to Douglas and interred there by his own direction. He was thrice married—(1) to Mary Erskine, a daughter of John, first Earl of Mar, Regent of Scotland. By the Act 1581, c. 77, Parliament ratified her infestment.⁴ He had no issue by her, and she died within two years of her marriage. (2) He was next married to the Lady Margaret Leslie, daughter of Andrew, Earl of Rothes, between 1575 and 1581. In consideration

¹ Calderwood, iv. 389-392; Privy Council Register, iv. 30, 31.

² Acts of Parliament, iii. 373-422.

³ Calderwood, iv. 640; Acts of Parliament, iii. 472; Registrum Honoris de Morton, ii. 316-318.

⁴ Acts of Parliament, iii. 267.

of 12,000 merks agreed to be paid by the Earl of Rothes to his daughter, the Earl of Angus on 29th November 1551 engaged to infest her "in her virginity" for her life in, *inter alia*, the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy, and with the consent of Parliament to infest her accordingly.¹ She was divorced from Angus about the beginning of 1587. (3) In July of that year he married Jean Lyon, daughter of John, tenth Lord Glamis, and widow of Robert Douglas of Lochleven, who was drowned in 1583. By his third countess the earl had a daughter, who died unmarried at the age of fifteen.²

On 25th December 1588 the king (James VI.) granted a charter in favour of Jean Lyon, Countess of Angus, in which, on a narrative of the laudable services and good offices rendered to himself and to the State by the deceased Archibald, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy, and of his great labours and cares in executing the offices committed to him, and that he while on his deathbed committed to the royal protection the Lady Jean Lyon, Countess of Angus, his wife, then pregnant; and that the said Jean was infest in conjunct liferent in the lands and lordships of Abernethy, with the fortalice, manor, fishings, mills, salmon-fishings, tenandries, &c., in the sheriffdom of Perth; in the lands of Bothwell in the sheriffdom of Lanark; in the lands and lordship of Tantallon with the dominical lands in the constabulary of Haddington and sheriffdom of Edinburgh, in special warrandice of Abernethy and Bothwell; in the lands and lordship of Cockburnspath, with the tower, manor, meadows, woods, mills, tenandries, &c., in the sheriffdom of Berwick; and that she is served in the terce of all the lands of the earldom of Angus through the decease of the said Archibald; and that the right to the lands of the said earldom belongs to the king as heir of line of the deceased James, Master of Angus, last lawful heir to the possessor of the same, so that the rights made by the

¹ G. S. R., 1580-93, p. 93, No. 281.

² The Douglas Book, ii. 323-366; Douglas Peerage, i. 438, 439.

same Archibald were of no force : the king ratified the said infeftments and service, and of new gave to the said Jean for her life the lands and lordships of Abernethy, Bothwell, Tantallon, and Cockburnspath, with the pertinents ; as also the third of all the lands in which she was served, and which are particularly mentioned.¹

Jean Lyon, Countess of Angus, survived the earl, and three or four years after his death married as her third husband Alexander Lindsay, younger brother of David, eleventh Earl of Crawford, to whom she had several children.²

We see again how the history of the parish is related to that of the great family of Angus, and we have collected together the charters relating to it. There are, however, two other charters, belonging to the time of Archibald Douglas, eighth Earl of Angus, which are peculiarly interesting as casting light upon the Church during the time immediately subsequent to the Reformation, and as illustrating the manner in which the Roman Catholic clergy here disposed of the Church lands by private bargain, when their services as priests were no longer required by the Reformed Church established in 1560.

On March 5, 1572-73, King James VI. confirmed a charter by Mr Henry Schaw, prebendary of the prebend of the collegiate church of Abernethy, called Balmanno, and granted with the consent of the provost, prebendaries, and chapter of the church, and of Archibald, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy, patron of the prebend ; James, Earl of Morton, Lord Dalkeith, &c., Regent of Scotland ; Alexander, Earl of Glencairn, Lord of Kilmaurs ; and William, Lord Ruthven, curators of Archibald, for their interest. The confirmed charter is in favour of George Auchinleck, rector of Kilbocho, and Elizabeth Auchinleck, his spouse, of the church lands of the prebend of Balmanno (occupied by Andrew Duncan, Peter Duncan, Elizabeth or Bessie Duncan, and Andrew Marshall),

¹ G. S. R., 1580-93, p. 551, No. 1610.

² The Douglas Book, ii. 323-366.

in the barony and regality of Abernethy, with the manse and garden near the said church. Rendering for the lands twenty-four merks, twelve capons, or eighteenpence for each, twelve fowls or twelve-pence for each; for the manse, &c., 13s. 4d., an old feu-duty, and £4, 6s. 8d. in augmentation of the rental—in all £21 and the said twelfths (“et dictas duodenas”), and doubling the said £21 on the entry of heirs. This charter bears to have been granted at the collegiate church on March 2, 1572. This charter by Schaw proceeds upon the narrative that the ecclesiastical service to which the said college was devoted was abolished, and that the residence and service of those having its care was no longer necessary.¹

On November 14, 1577, King James VI. confirmed a charter, dated November 1577, and granted by Mr John Provand, provost of the collegiate church of Abernethy; Mr Henry Schaw, prebendary of Balmanno; Walter Arnot, prebendary of Pettinbrog; John Reid, prebendary of Pitmedden; George Douglas, prebendary of Colzy and Balmanno; and Archibald Jardine, prebendary of Colzy, brethren (*confratres*) of the said church, by which charter, in *consideration of great sums of money paid*, they with the consent of the remaining prebendaries of the church and of Archibald, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy, patron of the said church, grant in feu to George Auchinleck of Balmanno, and Elizabeth Auchinleck, his spouse, the lands of Baiglie, in the barony and regality of Abernethy. To be held by George and his wife in conjunct liferent and their lawful children; whom failing, the heirs whatsoever or assignees of the said George, of the said provost, &c., for payment of £14, 13s. 3d. of ancient feu-duty and 6s. 9d. of augmentation, and doubling the said £15 on the entry of heirs and assignees.²

There is another document which shows that the church possessed lands in the parish of Methven—probably from Culdee

¹ R. M. S., 1546-80, p. 557, No. 2125.

Ibid., pp. 747, 748, No. 2737.

times. A charter containing precept of sasine, and bearing date the 24th November 1565, was granted by

Mr William Schaw, provost of the colligiat church of Abernethy, with consent of the prebends and canons chapterly convened, whereby he feus out and disposes to Edmond Moncrief, son to Mr John Moncrief of Pilnamoen (?), and Margaret Moncrief, his spouse, in conjunct fee and liferent, and the heirs of their bodies—which failzieing, the said Edmond, his heirs and assigneys,—all and sundry their lands of Caldrum, with the pertinents called Kildis lands, lyeing in the shire of Perth, to be halden of the said church of Abernethie, in feu-farm, fee, and heritage, paying yearly the same feu-dutys mentioned in the former charter without any variation.

Sasine following thereon in favours of the said Edmond Moncrief and spouse, under the hand of James Fleming, nottar, dated the 14th of March 1569.

Charter of confirmation by King James the Sixth under the Great Seall, confirming and containing, *in gramio*, the foresaid charter granted by Mr William Schaw. This charter is dated the 13th of August 1586.¹

By the death of Archibald, eighth Earl of Angus, the male line of George, Master of Angus, the eldest son of Archibald, fifth earl, commonly called Bell-the-Cat, became extinguished. The succession to the earldom then devolved on the heir-male of the eighth earl, Sir William Douglas of Glenbervie. The title of Earl of Morton descended to Sir William Douglas of Lochleven as seventh earl.

9. WILLIAM DOUGLAS, ninth Earl of Angus, succeeded his cousin on August 4, 1588,² and died on July 1, 1591. During his lifetime there is nothing special to add regarding Abernethy.

10. WILLIAM DOUGLAS, tenth Earl of Angus, was son of the ninth earl, and was born about 1554. He served his kinsman the Earl of Morton for two years and afterwards went to France, and in the Court of King Henry III. at Paris remained till 1580. While there he became a firm adherent of the Catholic faith.

¹ The Provostry of Methven, pp. 46, 47.

² Privy Council Register, iii. 663.

This change of religion exposed him to much danger in Scotland, and to win him back to Protestantism his father arranged his marriage with Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Lord Oliphant, which took place in 1585. It is said, however, that she ultimately adopted her husband's faith. In view of his profession of religion, his father at one time contemplated disinheriting him in favour of the second son, to prevent the probability of forfeiture. Ultimately this intention was abandoned. The Master of Angus was placed by the Kirk under its ban, and was ordered by the Privy Council to leave the kingdom on account of his religion. He could not find a ship in which to leave, and a few years later was dealt with as a Jesuit and excommunicated person, and ordered to ward under the pain of death. In May 1591 he incurred the penalties of forfeiture. His uncle, Alexander Guthrie, however, became security that the Master would ward himself in Dundee within four days, and go abroad within forty days.¹ But at this juncture his father, the earl, was seized with his fatal illness and died on 1st July, and on the 10th the Master, now earl, applied for and obtained permission from the king to go to Glenbervie and bury his father. He was afterwards allowed to ward himself in Edinburgh, Leith, or Canongate, or within a mile of these places.

On November 10, 1591, he was served heir to his father in the domains of Angus and Glenbervie, after which he sold Glenbervie and Kemnay to his brother Robert, who thenceforth carried on the line of Glenbervie. In the Parliament of 1592 the earl had his rights recognised and confirmed. In 1592 he succeeded in effecting the submission of Huntly and Athole. He was connected with the Popish plot known as the "Spanish Blanks," and was imprisoned in the Castle of Edinburgh, but escaped on February 13, 1593, and a few days later was denounced rebel. The escheat of the earl was granted to Mr Robert Douglas, provost

¹ Privy Council Register, iv. 521, 548, 619, 624; Calderwood, v. 129.

of Lincluden, and the earl was summoned to appear before Parliament on 2nd June. Parliament, however, delayed procedure, and the king afterwards rescinded the gift of the earl's escheat and retained it in his own hands. The Kirk on 25th September excommunicated Angus and his associates. The earl waylaid the king and entreated a trial for himself and associates: he obtained a promise that it would take place in Perth, whither he was commanded to return and ward himself. The trial was cancelled, and a commission was appointed to inquire into the case. The result was the Act of Abolition, by which the charges in respect of the "Spanish Blanks" were to be consigned to oblivion provided the earl would accept the reformed religion or go into exile. If he chose the latter alternative, his lands and livings were still to be enjoyed by him and his heirs. The earl made no response, and Parliament rescinded the Act of Abolition and enacted that the earl had forfeited all the benefits which it conferred.¹ Angus was ordered to ward himself in Blackness Castle, but having failed to do so, Parliament decreed forfeiture. His possessions were bestowed on Ludovic, Duke of Lennox.²

Angus, Huntly, and Errol became confederates, and an expedition to the North under Argyle was ordered, but the force was defeated by Huntly at Glenlivet in September 1594. The king then invaded Huntly's country in person, and after doing much destruction, compelled Huntly and Errol to take refuge in Caithness, where they were joined by Angus and Bothwell after an ineffectual attempt to surprise Edinburgh. Angus remained in the country, and Lennox appropriated the revenues of his estates. The king, however, was favourable to the forfeited earls, and endeavoured to reconcile them with the Kirk. In 1596 Huntly and Errol returned in disguise to the country, and, through the intervention

¹ Acts of Parliament, iv. 46-48, 52, 53; Calderwood, v. 289-291.

² Acts of Parliament, iv. 56-61; Privy Council Register, v. 130, 134, 145, 809; Calderwood, v. 292, 332; Douglas charter-chest.

of Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, the Duke of Lennox resigned the earldom of Angus in favour of the Master of Angus. In 1597 the General Assembly authorised the absolution of Angus, and he was released from civil outlawry in August. In December Angus and Errol had the Act of forfeiture against them rescinded by Parliament, and their restoration to their livings, honours, and dignities was declared at the cross of Edinburgh on 13th December.¹ The earl was then reinstated as Privy Councillor, and in the following June received a commission as lieutenant over the whole Scottish Borders and several of the southern counties.

When the eldest daughter of King James was baptised in 1599, the Earl of Huntly and Lord John Hamilton were created marquises—a title now for the first time introduced into Scotland. Angus was at the time on the Borders, but obtained an instrument from the king declaring that the rights of the earl and his successors should be in no degree prejudiced. This, however, did not prevent subsequent dispute and a protest by Angus.² After the marriage of the Master of Angus a re-grant of the earldom was made by charter of entail in 1602, and ratified by Parliament in 1606.³ The Master was married while in minority to Lady Margaret Hamilton, daughter of Claud, Lord Paisley, and niece of Lord Seaton.

Angus still retained his faith in the Roman Catholic religion, and in 1608 the Kirk commenced active proceedings against the Catholic earls, and in May, at its instance, Angus was ordered to ward himself in Glasgow.⁴ The presbytery of that city and the synod of Clydesdale were ordered to confer with the earl; but remaining obdurate, he was excommunicated by the presbytery on 21st September. In November the king acceded to the earl's

¹ Tytler, vii. 354, 355; Acts of Parliament, iv. 123-130, 149, 150; Thorpe's Calendar, ii. 740; Calderwood, v. 668.

² Calderwood, vi. 99; Thorpe's Calendar, ii. 789, 798, 809; Acts of Parliament, iv. 276.

³ Acts of Parliament, iv. 311, 312.

⁴ Balfour's Annals, ii. 28.

petition to be allowed to go to France in voluntary exile, and he left Scotland, according to Balfour, in November 1608.¹ He resided in Paris till his death on March 3, 1611.² The earl left three sons and three daughters. His eldest son, William, succeeded his father as eleventh earl. His second son, Sir James Douglas of Mordington, was created first Lord Mordington, and in 1608 was provost of Abernethy. These events in the life of William Douglas, tenth Earl of Angus, are reflected in the vicissitudes through which the parish passed during the same period.

(1) On December 6, 1594, King James VI. granted a charter in favour of Ludovic, Duke of Lennox, Earl Darnlie, Lord Tarbolton, Methven, and Aubigny, and Great Chamberlain, of, *inter alia*, the lands and lordship of Abernethy, with the regality of the same, and mills, woods, fishings, the patronage of the provostry and prebends of the collegiate church of the same, and of all churches, benefices, and chaplainries of the same, with the tenandries, &c., in the sheriffdom of Perth. Which lands, &c., and the several others specified in the charter, had fallen to the Crown by the forfeiture of William, sometime Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy, &c. (8th June 1594), and had been incorporated by the king in the free earldom of Angus, who willed that the Castle of Bothwell should be the principal messuage. To be held by the said Ludovic and the heirs-male of his body; whom failing, by Esmo Stewart, his brother-german, and the heirs lawfully procreated of his body; whom failing, to revert to the king with the privilege of free forest.³

(2) On July 25, 1598, King James VI. granted a charter to James Leslie, eldest son and heir of James, Master of Rothes, of, *inter alia*, the lands of Eichame, Logy, Fliskis Easter and Wester, Fliskmillane, Balhavia, Pittenhop, Balmedysyde, Colsy, Pitcairlyis Easter and Wester, Drumbarroch, Lumbenis Easter

¹ Balfour's Annals, ii. 29.

² The Douglas Book, ii. 380, 404.

³ R. M. S., 1593-1608, pp. 65, 66, No. 192.

and Wester, five bolls of barley of annual rent from the lands and lordship of Abernethy, with the fortalices of the same, mills, woods, meadows, tenandries, fishings of the said barony on the water of Tay, with the ferry-boats, of the said water, between Corbieden and the narrow outlet of the water of Erne to the middle of the said stream, with the patronage of the parish church of Flisk and the prebend of the collegiate church of Abernethy called Forevinschip, and the chaplaincy of the chapel of Glenducky and the other churches and chaplainries of the said barony, &c.¹

(3) On February 3, 1602-3, William, Earl of Angus, had a charter to himself and William, Lord Douglas, Master of Angus, his eldest son, of the earldom of Angus, comprehending the lordships of Abernethy, Kirriemuir, Selkirk, Jedburgh Forest, Bonkill, Preston, Bothwell, &c.² It is thus given in the Great Seal Register: "Charter by James VI. for himself and as administrator and tutor to his son, Prince Henry, to William, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas, Abernethy, &c., for his life, and to William, Lord Douglas, Master of Angus, in fee, *inter alia*, the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy, with the regality of the same, and the patronage of the provostry and prebends of the collegiate church of the same, and other churches, benefices, and chaplainries of the same (except the parish church of Abernethy, belonging to the Abbey of Arbroath)." ³

(4) On June 9, 1602, King James VI. granted a charter to Sir Patrick Murray of Gaynes, Knight, and Lady Isobel Brown, his wife, of the lands of Balbyn and Drumcarne (Drumcairn), with the manor, in the parish of Abernethy, which lands had been resigned by Thomas Hamilton of Preisfield and Mr Thomas Hamilton of Drumcarne, king's advocate, with the consent of their respective

¹ R. M. S., 1593-1608, pp. 246, 247, No. 759.

² Douglas Peerage, i. 440; R. M. S., xliv., No. 22.

³ R. M. S., 1593-1608, p. 449, No. 1283.

spouses, and of Thomas Hamilton of Innerwick for his interest, in favour of the said Sir Patrick and his wife, and was granted by the king of new, for the good services of the said persons, and he incorporated the same into the free barony of Byn, ordering the manor of Byn to be the principal manorage.¹

(5) On May 30, 1606, King James VI. granted a charter to David, Earl of Scone—"computorum rotulatori"—of, *inter alia*, the patronage of the rectory and vicarages of the churches and parishes of Abernethy and Strathmiglo, in the shires of Perth and Fife.²

(6) On January 15, 1611, King James VI. confirmed a charter, dated September 1601, granted by William, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy, and William, Master of Angus, his eldest lawful son and heir-apparent, with the consent of the said earl, his lawful tutor, and Sir John Wishart of Pittaro and Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, curators of the said Master, by which on fulfilment of a contract entered into between them on the one hand and Robert, Earl of Winton, Lord Seyton, &c.; Claud, Lord Paisley; the Lady Margaret Seyton, his spouse; Alexander, Lord Fyvie, President of the Supreme Court of the realm; James Morton of Paisley, eldest son and heir-apparent of the said Claud; Lady Margaret Hamilton, eldest lawful daughter of the said Claud; and Sir William Seytoun of Kynmuir, Knight, brother-german of the said Earl of Winton, on the other part, dated at Edinburgh, July 11, 1601, and registered in the books of the Lords of Council,—they granted to the said Margaret Hamilton, affianced spouse of the said Master of Angus, in liferent, *inter alia*, the lands and barony of Abernethy and the property of the same—viz., the towns and lands of Colfurgie, the lands of Pitbla (occupied by Andrew Balvaird and George Anderson), the town and lands of Tollindie, the third part of the town and lands of Pitgrugnie (occupied by Robert Fynnestoun), four and a half acres of the lands of Pitkemren, the

¹ R. M. S., 1593-1608, p. 461, No. 1316.

² *Ibid.*, p. 633, No. 1746.

salmon-fishings in the water of Erne, the rents or feu-maills of the burgh of Abernethy and—"solaris dimidietatis"—of the lands of Mundy, the feu-maills of the lands of Balmanow and the kain-beir of the same, the annual rents of the lands of Kars and Aberargie, the lands of Pittinde, the acres of land called Meikleflat, with the kains of the same, the town and lands of Carpow with their fishings on the water of Tay, the fishing of Methven's-coble, the mill of Forg (or Fargie), its lands, &c., with power to win fuel, fail, or divot in Muirmonth-muir, the acres of the lands of Pitcuran, Reidinsches, and the kane-beir of Nather Aberargie, in the barony and regality of Abernethy and sheriffdom of Perth, with the privilege of pasturing animals and winning fuel, fail, and divot in the common muirs of the land according to custom, and with the privilege of regality of the said lands granted in property to the said Margaret Hamilton. Rendering to the king a red rose in name of blench-farm, with clause of warrandice receiving, saving the sets and infestments granted by the said Earl of Angus and Lady Jean Lyon, Countess of Angus, relict of Archibald, Earl of Angus.¹

(7) April 29, 1612. Charter by James VI. to David, Earl of Scone, of, *inter alia*, the teind sheaves and other teinds and duties as well of the rectory as the vicarage of the churches and parish of Abernethy.²

11. WILLIAM DOUGLAS, eleventh Earl of Angus, was twenty-two years of age when he succeeded his father in the earldom, being born about 1589. The first document in which the young Master of Angus is mentioned is a resignation in his favour by Ludovic, Duke of Lennox, of the earldom and estates which had been granted to him on the forfeiture of the former earl. This resignation, dated 1596, was secured by an arrangement effected by Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie with the duke, and was granted in favour of William, Master of Angus, and failing him, of James, the

¹ G. S. R., 1609-20, p. 155, No. 422.

² *Ibid.*, p. 238, No. 644.

second son. In the following year Angus was restored. In 1601, when but twelve years, William, Master of Angus, was married to Margaret Hamilton, daughter of Claud Hamilton, Lord Paisley! In 1616 the earl obtained leave to travel abroad for three years, and at the expiry of that term he returned to Scotland. He was present at the Parliament of July 1621, and consented to the ratification of the Five Articles of Perth, which were obnoxious to the majority of the ministers, as they involved innovations on the Presbyterian form of worship. He went to the Continent in 1623, granting a commission to the Earl of Morton, his own brother James and others, to administer the estate in his absence. He returned to Scotland about 1625, and was suspected by the Kirk for having been favourable to "papistrie."

In 1631 a charter was passed under the Great Seal, conferring on the earl in liferent, and his eldest son Archibald, Lord Douglas, in fee, the whole earldom of Angus, with the privilege of the first seat and vote in Parliament and Council, of leading the van in battle, and bearing the crown at the riding of the Parliament.¹ On 14th and 17th June 1633, during the visit of King Charles I. to Scotland, the earl was created Marquis of Douglas, and he then resigned his privilege of the first vote in Parliament, receiving only the precedence of the date of his creation.² He, however, bore the crown at the king's coronation as his ancestors had done. His resignation of the first vote in Parliament was afterwards challenged on the ground that he was only a liferenter, and the whole privileges of the earldom of Angus were afterwards acknowledged and ratified in the last Scottish Parliament.³ Between 1633 and 1638, when the rupture between King Charles I. and the Scottish Covenanters took place, the marquis seems to have resided chiefly at Douglas Castle, and occupied himself with his estates. He continued, how-

¹ R. M. S., 1620-33, pp. 595-597, No. 1750.

² Acts of Parliament, v. 10; The Douglas Book, iii. 326-329.

³ March 25, 1707; Acts of Parliament, xi. 476; cf. ix. p. 99, x. p. 128, xi. 403.

ever, to be regarded with suspicion by the presbytery, both on account of his non-attendance at church, and as being a Royalist with strong leanings towards Episcopacy.

The opposition made in 1637 to the introduction of the Service Book in Scotland brought matters to a crisis between the king and the Scots, and this was aggravated by the bishops, who, contrary to the wiser views of the Privy Council, urged the king to establish the Service Book by force. Especially did the Bishop of Ross urge such a course in the north of Scotland. In carrying out this plan the bishop courted the assistance of the Marquis of Douglas and other adherents of Episcopacy.¹ The Covenanting party, however, were too active for their opponents, and rapidly procured subscriptions not only in the Western Highlands, but in Inverness, Ross, and the northern shires. After the deposition of the bishops by the triumphant Assembly of 1638, the Covenanting leaders determined to use in their own cause that force which had been threatened against themselves. The sword was first drawn in Aberdeen, but the castles of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Dalkeith in the south were also attacked, and passed into the hands of the Covenanters. On March 20, 1639, a detachment of troops under the command of John, Lord Fleming, and several western barons arrived before Douglas Castle, but no resistance was offered to them. The marquis had retired to England, and a strong force was placed in the castle, where the marchioness, then in delicate health, continued to remain. The marquis returned home after the pacification of Berwick, and kept up communication with the king, who in the beginning of 1640 wrote that a breach with the "Covenanting rebels" was inevitable. The breach did take place: the Scottish army marched into England, but the marquis does not appear to have taken any part in the campaign, nor does he appear to have waited upon the king when the latter was in Scotland in 1641, and there is no evidence that he was present in the Parliament of that

¹ Balfour's Annals, ii. 263; Baillie's Letters, i. 65, 70, 71.

year. In 1644, however, the marquis was in attendance on the Parliament which sat in July, when the Scottish army was in England fighting against the Royalist troops. In the beginning of the year he yielded to the ecclesiastical pressure brought to bear upon him, and signed the Covenant in open congregation with much solemnity. He repeated this ceremony during the sitting of the Parliament.¹

In August 1645, however, the marquis for a time threw off his allegiance to the Covenant, and openly joined the Royalists, who, under the Marquis of Montrose, had achieved a series of victories for the king's cause. The Marquis of Douglas among others levied troops in aid of Montrose, and from him received a commission of lieutenancy over Clydesdale. He was present with Montrose's army when routed at Philiphaugh, but effected his escape. In April following he was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, whence he was liberated early in 1647 on payment of a heavy fine (50,000 merks). Immediately after his release he was compelled by the local presbytery to confess his breach of the Covenant, and to make a public acknowledgment and reaffirmation. From this time until the close of his life the marquis had continued disputes with the Presbytery of Lanark. He was a member of the Parliament presided over by King Charles II. in 1651, first at Perth, then at Stirling. In March of that year he was nominated one of the committee for managing the army, and in June, after signing the Act of Security, was appointed one of the Committee of Estates, with executive functions.² In 1654 he was fined £1000 by Cromwell, but the fine was afterwards reduced to one-third of that amount. He died February 19, 1660, and was succeeded in his titles and estates by his grandson James, who became second Marquis of Douglas.³

The following are the notices we find of Abernethy during the

¹ Acts of Parliament, vi. 1, 95, 201; Balfour's Annals, iii. 179.

² Ibid., vi. 11, 655, 678, 679.

³ Douglas Peerage, i. 441, 442.

time of William, eleventh Earl of Angus and first Marquis of Douglas :—

(1) On March 12, 1631, King Charles I. granted a charter by which he conveyed to Lady Anne Stewart, wife of Archibald, Lord Douglas, sister-german of James, Duke of Lennox, Earl of March and Darnley, &c., in liferent, *inter alia*, the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy, with the regality of the same, with mills, fishings, tenandries, &c., in the county of Perth, with the burgh of barony of Abernethy, with the annual free fair on 19th June and 4th October (excepting the patronage of the provostry and prebends of the collegiate church of Abernethy, and other benefices of the same belonging to the Abbey of Arbroath), in full satisfaction to the said Anne of the conjunct infeftments of the thirds, &c., of the lands mentioned in the contract between the king and her, with consent of the said Archibald on the one part, and William, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas and Abernethy, &c., and the said Archibald, his eldest lawful son, with consent of his curators, on the other part, dated November 9, 1629, and May 13, 1630 (registered in the books of Council and Session, August 17, 1630). Also to the said Archibald, Lord Douglas, and the lawful heirs-male of his body,—whom failing, to the said William and his heirs-male,—entail contained in his infeftment of the earldom of Angus, comprehending the whole lands, lordships, and baronies therein described, including, *inter alia*, the lands, lordship, and barony of Abernethy as above set forth. As also all the dignities formerly possessed by the Earls of Angus—viz., the first place in sitting and voting in Parliament, &c., in leading the van in war, and carrying the king's crown at Parliaments—all incorporated in the earldom of Angus by the charter of King James VI. to William sometime Earl of Angus in liferent, and to the said William, then Earl of Angus, in fee, dated February 3, 1602.¹

(2) Charter by King Charles I., dated 4th December 1630, in

¹ R. M. S., 1620-33, pp. 595-597, No. 1750.

favour of Mr Andrew Murray of Balvaird, of, *inter alia*, the lands of Ballinblae, and also the "decimas garbales"—teind sheaves—and other teinds and profits of the rectory and vicarage of the parish church of Abernethy and sheriffdom of Fife and Perth.¹

(3) Charter by King Charles I., dated 14th July 1632, in favour of Mr Andrew Murray of Balvaird, of, *inter alia*, the lands and barony of Arngask, with the lands of Abernethy as above.²

(4) By an Act of Parliament, 1646, c. 10, the sheriff court of Perth was appointed to sit at Abernethy while the plague continued at Perth.³

(5) Publication of an Act of Parliament was ordered to be made at Abernethy for Perthshire.⁴

The plague referred to in No. 4 was fever and influenza, which raged over England and Scotland.

There was a great prevalence of the infection in Scotland. After the storming of Newcastle by the Scots Covenanters in October 1644, the plague appeared in Edinburgh, Kelso, Borrowstounness, Perth, and other places. On April 1, 1645, Kelso was burned down, the fire having originated in a house that was being "clengit" or disinfected after plague in it. At Edinburgh the plague-stricken were housed in huts in the King's Park below Salisbury Crags. Collections were made for the relief of people in Leith impoverished by the plague. The epidemic in and around Perth is said to have given rise to the story of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray, who fled from the plague-tainted ground and built themselves a bower by a burn-side (Chambers, 'Domestic Annals of Scotland'). At Glasgow the infection was severe in the end of 1646, and did not cease entirely until the autumn of 1648. There are numerous references to it in the letters of Principal Baillie of Glasgow University.⁵

12. JAMES DOUGLAS, second Marquis of Douglas, was the son of Archibald, Earl of Angus, and his first wife, the Lady Anne Stewart, daughter of Esmo, third Duke of Lennox. By the death

¹ R. M. S., 1620-33, p. 559, No. 1673.

² A. P. S., vi. 1, 617.

³ History of Epidemics in Britain, by Charles Crichton, M.A., M.D., p. 563.

⁴ Ibid., p. 689, No. 2023.

⁵ Ibid., 621.

of his father during the lifetime of William, first Marquis of Douglas, he became heir to the family estates and titles, and succeeded to them at the death of his grandfather in 1660. Previous to that date, and subsequent to the death of his father, he bore the courtesy title of Earl of Angus.

Born about 1646, James, second marquis, was a boy at the time of his father's death, and still under age when he succeeded his grandfather. At the death of his son the first marquis made a new disposition in favour of his grandson, James, Earl of Arran. This step was taken by the advice of the Duke of Hamilton and eminent lawyers on account of the embarrassments which, by injudicious cautionary obligations and the large provisions of his marriage-contract with Lady Jean Wemyss,—without his father's consent,—Archibald, Earl of Angus, had brought upon the family. In the charter power was taken to pursue a judicial reduction of the marriage-contract of the Countess of Angus. The countess concurred, however, and matters were amicably arranged on the footing that the baronies of Boncle and Preston should be secured in liferent to her, and an aliment provided for her children by the heir-apparent to the marquissate.

When James, Earl of Angus, succeeded to the marquissate of Douglas on the death of his grandfather, the succession was almost hopelessly embarrassed, and in January 1661 he chose sixteen of the barons most nearly related to the family of Douglas to be his curators. The young marquis did not attend the meeting of Parliament held at Edinburgh on January 1, 1661,—the first Scottish Parliament after the restoration of King Charles II.,—but steps were taken to protect the ancient honours and privileges of the family against claims made both by the Duke of Hamilton and the Duke of Lennox, and the rights of the marquis were admitted and confirmed by the Privy Council in 1669.

James, Marquis of Douglas, on arriving at full age, was, on September 8, 1668, served heir to his father in the earldom of

Angus, and was formally infeft in the lands a month later. He executed an act of revocation, annulling all contracts and charters granted during his minority. The rearrangements necessary with his relatives who had claims upon the estates were amicably made. His marriage with the Lady Barbara Erskine, daughter of John, Earl of Mar, in 1670 was unhappy, and a contract of separation was executed, under which the countess was to receive an aliment of 3000 merks yearly. She died in 1690, unreconciled to her husband.

During the reign of Charles II. and his brother, the Duke of York, the marquis was frequently present in Parliament, but never came prominently forward. Perhaps his apathy in public affairs may have been produced by aversion to the extreme and oppressive measures of his time, for he took a very active part in the political measures which brought about the Revolution. He was present at the meeting of Estates in Edinburgh in March and April 1689, subscribed the declaration of the Convention against King James VII. and the letter of invitation to William, Prince of Orange, and he was appointed a member of the Executive Committee for managing national affairs till a final settlement of the Government had been arranged.¹ From King William III. the marquis received, about 1690, a gift of the forfeited estates of John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, of a portion of which the Earls of Angus held the superiority. This grant included Glen Ogilvie, the ancient territory of the Ogilvies.² He was also at the same time appointed to the heritable office of constable of the castle and town of Dundee, which had been last held by Claverhouse. This conferred upon the holder the position of chief magistrate of that town, with power to hold courts, civil and criminal, uplift certain customs and dues, and govern the citizens with immediate responsibility to the Crown.

In 1692 his only son and heir, James, Lord Angus, was

¹ A. P. S., ix. pp. 1, 9, 20, 79, &c.

² The Douglas Book, ii. 593.

killed at Steinkirk. After this the marquis married Lady Mary Ker, eldest surviving daughter of Robert, Earl and afterwards first Marquis of Lothian. The estates of the Marquis of Douglas were at this time under the management of William Lawrie, who was styled Laird of Blackwood, and had been since March 14, 1670. The marquis had full confidence in him till nearly the close of his life, notwithstanding the efforts of his friends to shake it. So burdened had the estates become in 1681 that Blackwood proposed the sale of the Abernethy and Angus lands, and the raising of several loans from friends of the family of £20,000 each on security of the rest of the estates. Even the sympathies of King Charles II. were aroused, and he directed the chancellor and treasurer of Scotland to inquire into the condition of affairs; but Blackwood is said to have succeeded in frustrating it, and continued the uncontrolled management for twenty-eight years. At last the marchioness induced her father, the Earl of Lothian, to interfere, with the result that the affairs of the marquis were found to be in great confusion, and a commission was appointed by him to manage his affairs. By them proceedings against Blackwood were instituted: 12,000 merks were allowed the marquis for the maintenance of himself and his household, and the remainder of the rental was reserved to extinguish a debt of upwards of £240,000 Scots. The barony of Tantallon was sold in 1699. Under their judicious management the estate was eventually cleared, and the successor of the marquis reaped the benefit of these disinterested labours.

Before the commissioners were formally vested as such, they persuaded the marquis to denude himself of his estate in favour of his only son then alive, Archibald, Lord Angus. This he did in 1697, reserving the question of who should be heir of entail until two years later, when he settled the succession, giving his brother Archibald, Earl of Forfar, a right to inherit immediately after the failure of the heirs of the marquis and Lord Angus.

The marquis died on February 25, 1700, aged fifty-four. He was survived by his second wife.

Abernethy was retained by him, notwithstanding the financial difficulties by which he was constantly perplexed; and it is interesting to observe that in granting a charter to the minister and kirk-session of the parish church he desired "the offering prayers and supplications to Almighty God for the safety and prosperity of us and our families and our successors once annually at the feast of Whitsunday in the church of Abernethy by the minister thereof." See "Charter of Novodamus by the Marquis of Douglas in favour of the Minister and Kirk-Session of Abernethy, 3rd May 1683."

13. ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, third Marquis and first Duke of Douglas, succeeded his father James, second marquis, when he was but six years old: he was born in 1694. While he was yet a minor his friends pressed in Parliament the claim for precedence due to his family, and on January 16, 1707, before the passing of the Act of Union, a special protest was made that the treaty should not prejudice his honours and privileges of the first vote in Parliament, conveying the crown and leading the van in battle. Before the final dissolution of Parliament an Act was passed ratifying a charter confirming and securing these privileges to the marquis and his successors.¹

The titles Duke of Douglas, Marquis of Angus, Earl of Angus and Abernethy, Viscount of Jedburgh Forest, Lord Douglas of Boncle, Preston, and Robertson, were conferred on the young marquis by Queen Anne on April 18, 1703; and in 1707, after a resignation by the duke, the queen granted the charter already referred to, which, besides confirming the ancient privileges of the family, erected the Douglas and Angus estates into a dukedom and regality.² Queen Anne seems to have taken a special interest

¹ A. P. S., xi. 32, 48, 52, 116, 209, 303, 403, 475.

² Ibid., xi. 476. Resignation and charter dated March 10, 1707.

in the young duke. The expenses of his education were defrayed by a pension of £400 a-year, payable out of the lordships of Dunbar and Ettrick, and in 1710 an additional sum of £500 a-year was ordered to be paid to him by the governor of the Leeward Islands. On the accession of King George I. the duke and his tutors petitioned the king to continue the favours and possessions bestowed by Queen Anne, and the petition was indorsed by the Scottish Treasury, but the result is not known.

In 1715, when the standard of insurrection was raised by the Earl of Mar on behalf of the Pretender, the duke actively supported the Government, and mustered and trained a force of 300 men. He was with the Duke of Argyll (commander-in-chief) at the battle of Sheriffmuir. In 1725 the duke killed Captain John Ker, a natural son of Lord Mark Ker, while fencing or otherwise at Douglas Castle, and a few days afterwards went to Holland. He had returned in 1726, and from that time resided chiefly at Douglas Castle. On 24th December 1745 Prince Charles Edward spent the night at Douglas Castle, where he exacted free quarters, accounting the duke to be an enemy of his family.

(1) In March 1758 the duke married Miss Peggy or Margaret Douglas, eldest daughter of James Douglas of Mains, Dumbartonshire, a cadet of the family of Morton. Only a year after their marriage they separated by mutual consent, the duke granting her a yearly income of £250 sterling, on the condition that she made no effort to see or speak with him unless by his own invitation. Within a few months, however, a reconciliation was effected, and they remained together until the duke's death. By her friendly influence and that of others he was induced to do justice to the memory of his sister, Lady Jane Douglas; and he left his whole estates to his own nearest heirs, no longer excluding his surviving nephew, Archibald Stewart. The duke died on July 21, 1761, previously making various dispositions to his duchess and her nephew. He died without issue, and his estates, to which during

his life he had largely added by purchases of land, passed to his nephew, Archibald Stewart, eldest son of Lady Jean Douglas, the duke's sister. The Duchess of Douglas survived her husband thirteen years, and died on October 24, 1774.¹

In 1754 and 1757 the Duke of Douglas executed settlements in terms of which, failing heirs of his own body, he destined his estates to the family of Hamilton. After his marriage with Margaret Douglas of Mains, however, he on August 6, 1759, executed a post-nuptial contract of marriage with the duchess, by which, failing issue of his own body and heirs appointed or to be appointed by himself, he left his whole Douglas estates to his own nearest heirs and assignees, without excepting the son of his sister Jane. On January 5, 1760, he revoked and cancelled the settlements of 1754 and 1757. In July 1761, shortly before his death, he entailed his whole estate in favour of himself and the heirs whomsoever of his body, failing whom, of the heirs whomsoever of the body of his father, James, Marquis of Douglas; failing whom, in favour of Lord Douglas Hamilton and other heirs named. He also, by another deed, appointed the Duchess of Douglas, the Duke of Queensberry, and others, as tutors and guardians to Archibald Stewart or Douglas, who was declared to be the son of his sister, Lady Jane, and his successor in the estates of Douglas, failing issue of the duke's own body.²

(2) On his death the title of duke became extinct, and the titles of Marquis of Douglas and Earl of Angus were claimed by the Duke of Hamilton as heir-male. The title of Earl of Angus was also claimed by Archibald, Lord Douglas, as the heir of line.

14. ARCHIBALD JAMES EDWARD STEWART DOUGLAS, first Lord Douglas of Douglas, was the son of Lady Jean Douglas, only sister of the preceding Archibald Douglas, third Marquis

¹ The Douglas Book, ii. 464-472.

² Ibid., ii. 525, 526.

and first Duke of Douglas, and wife of Colonel John Stewart, afterwards Sir John Stewart of Grandtully, Baronet. Archibald and his younger brother, Sholto Thomas, were born on July 10, 1748. Sholto died in May 1753; his mother on November 21, 1753.

During the lifetime of Lady Jean, her brother Archibald, Marquis of Douglas, influenced apparently by the counsels of persons hostile to Lady Jean, treated her with great hostility, and refused to see either her or her children, the latter of whom he believed to be spurious. But in the later years of his life, and guided largely by the influence of his wife, he seems to have been satisfied that Archibald and Sholto were really his sister's children, and his treatment of her and them occasioned him much remorse on his deathbed. By his settlement in July 1761 he recognised Archibald as the son of his sister, and appointed him to be his successor, failing issue of his own body.

On the death of the duke, the tutors of Archibald obtained briefs for his service as heir of entail, and provision to his uncle in the Douglas and Angus estates, and this was not opposed by the next heir, the Duke of Hamilton. Two months later he obtained a charter from the Crown of the estates of Douglas as heir to his uncle, and was duly infeft in the lands.¹ Shortly afterwards, however, the Duke of Hamilton, who had been served nearest heir-male to the Duke of Douglas and the Earl of Selkirk, brought actions of reduction to set aside the title of Mr Stewart Douglas to the estates of Angus and Douglas and the lands of Dundee, but in December 1762 the Court of Session decided in favour of Mr Douglas. The victory, however, was comparatively brief, and the contest was renewed in another form. Three separate actions of reduction of the service of Archibald, as heir of his uncle the Duke of Douglas, were brought before the Court of Session on the

¹ Retour of Service, September 9, 1761; Crown Charter, 10th December, and Sasine following, December 17, 1761.

ground that he was not the son of the Lady Jane Douglas. One was raised by the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton ; another by Lord Douglas Hamilton, founded upon the entail of July 11, 1761 ; and a third by Sir Hew Dalrymple, of North Berwick, Baronet, one of the heirs of line. These three actions were conjoined by the Court, and the litigation which ensued became the famous Douglas Cause, one of the greatest pleas which ever came before the Court of Session. That Court, by the casting vote of Lord President Dundas, decided adversely to the claims of Mr Douglas, and the case was carried by appeal to the House of Lords, which reversed the judgment of the Court of Session, and on February 17, 1769, decided in favour of Archibald Douglas. Following upon their judgment he obtained possession of the family estates, but was harassed by actions of reduction until 1779, when these were finally settled in his favour by the House of Lords. He entered the House of Commons as member for the county of Forfar, of which he was lord-lieutenant ; but on July 9, 1790, he was created a British Peer with the title of Lord Douglas of Douglas. He died on December 26, 1827, in the eightieth year of his age, and was buried in the family vault at Douglas.

We have now traced the history of the great historical house of Douglas in its relation to the parish ; henceforth its annals are quieter, and there is not much of a distinctive kind in relation to the parish that remains to be recorded. The superiority of the parish fell in the line of succession, and was held by

15. ARCHIBALD, second Lord Douglas of Douglas, who held it from 1827 to 1844.

16. CHARLES, third Lord Douglas of Douglas (1844-48).

17. JAMES, fourth Lord Douglas of Douglas (1848-57).

18. The Honourable JANE MARGARET DOUGLAS, LADY MONTAGUE, who married Lord Henry James Montague, second surviving son of Henry, third Duke of Buccleuch. On the death of her brother, she inherited the Douglas and Angus estates in April 1857, and died on January 10, 1859.

19. LUCY ELIZABETH MONTAGUE DOUGLAS, COUNTESS OF HOME, who inherited the estates on her mother's death, was born in 1805, and married in 1832 Cospatrick Alexander Home, Lord Douglas, afterwards eleventh Earl of Home. On June 11, 1875, he was created a Peer of the United Kingdom, with the title of Baron Douglas of Douglas, to hold to him and the heirs-male of his body. Lucy, Countess of Home, died on May 15, 1877; the Earl of Home died on July 4, 1881, and was interred beside the countess in the church of St Bride, Douglas.

20. CHARLES ALEXANDER DOUGLAS HOME, eldest son of Lucy Elizabeth Douglas, Countess of Home, assumed in 1877 the surname and arms of Douglas. He was born April 11, 1834, and is the honoured representative of the family, and the superior of Abernethy.

CHAPTER XXV.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF ABERNETHY FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT.

"Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?"

IN former chapters we have seen that the parish church of Abernethy was served by a vicar from the Abbey of Arbroath; that the college of Culdees became a college of Canons Regular in 1273; that the Earl of Angus created this a collegiate church in the fifteenth century, and that it was presided over by a chapter, consisting of a provost and prebendaries. This order was abolished by the Reformation in 1560, and the old connection of the parish with Arbroath at the same time came to an end.

Before taking into consideration the particular facts relating to the parochial history of this period, it will be necessary to consider the general movement which conditioned them, and of which they were a reflection. The unit is only to be understood in its larger relationship to the organic development of the whole.

The religious movement known as the Reformation has been thus explained by a great historian:—

There is perhaps no event in history which has been represented in so great a variety of lights as the Reformation. It has been called a revolt of

the laity against the clergy, or of the Teutonic races against the Italians, or of the kingdoms of Europe against the universal monarchy of the Popes. Some have seen in it only a burst of long-repressed anger at the luxury of the prelates and the manifold abuses of the ecclesiastical system; others a renewal of the youth of the Church by a return to primitive forms of doctrine. All these, indeed, to some extent it was; but it was also something more profound, and fraught with mightier consequences than any of them. It was in its essence the assertion of the principle of individuality—that is to say, of true spiritual freedom. Hitherto the personal consciousness had been a faint and broken reflection of the universal; obedience had been held the first of religious duties; truth had been conceived as a something external and positive, which the priesthood who were its stewards were to communicate to the passive layman, and whose saving power lay not in its being felt and known by him to be truth, but in a purely formal and unwavering acceptance. The great principles which medieval Christianity still cherished were obscured by the limited, rigid, almost sensuous form which had been forced on them in times of ignorance and barbarism. That which was in its nature abstract, had been able to survive only by taking a concrete expression. The universal consciousness became the Visible Church; the Visible Church hardened into a government and degenerated into a hierarchy. Holiness of heart and life was sought by outward works, by penances and pilgrimages, by gifts to the poor and to the clergy, wherein there dwelt often little enough of a charitable mind. The presence of divine truth among men was symbolised under one aspect by the existence on earth of an infallible Vicar of God, the Pope; under another, by the reception of the present Deity in the sacrifice of the mass; in a third, by the doctrine that the priest's power to remit sins and administer the sacraments depended upon a transmission of miraculous gifts which can hardly be called other than physical. All this system of doctrine which might, but for the position of the Church as a worldly and therefore obstructive power, have expanded, renewed, and purified itself during the four centuries that had elapsed since its completion, and thus remained in harmony with the growing intelligence of mankind, was suddenly rent in pieces by the convulsion of the Reformation, and flung away by the more religious and more progressive peoples of Europe.¹

Such is the meaning of the Reformation, and only in this light is it to be understood. A great historical principle may sometimes take an exaggerated expression in fact, and some of the

¹ The Holy Roman Empire, by James Bryce, D.C.L., pp. 327-329.

extravagances that accompanied the Reformation are to be explained by the deep religious upheaval of which it was an expression. Such seems to be an inevitable concomitant of great movements, that affect not an individual but humanity as a whole: they have to be realised through men, and are coloured by the diverse temperaments of men. Yet, apart from this, the Reformation was a religious movement: it was a return from ceremonialism to spirituality; from a cold and lifeless system to a living, pervasive faith; from dead forms that were only characterised by outwardness to a religious life, the very essence of which was inwardness. It was the revolt from an external authority, and the demand for an inward and spiritual authority. In Scotland, as elsewhere, the Reformation was a recall to simplicity and spirituality, the emphasis of Christ as the Lord of the soul: it was a reversion from a religion of mediation to one of direct, immediate, personal relationship with God.

This was the principle that inspired and moved the Reformation, however much the objective form that it received was coloured by the political environment of the various countries in which it found expression. It is historically true to say that in almost every country where the Reformation took a deep hold, the form of doctrine which triumphed became allied with the State. It is in this way that National Churches arose, and each of these was to the country in which it was established what the Church Catholic was to the world at large,—it was coextensive with the State; it was the State in a religious aspect, and existed for the people who formed the State. The National Church of Scotland became Calvinistic in theology and Presbyterian in Church government: it was the Church reformed, freed from abuses, corruption, and errors; there was no schism, no disruption. The Church of Scotland was the bulk of the people and clergy, retaining their historical continuity as the Reformed Church.

The causes which brought the Church in Scotland, prior to the

Reformation, into such a deplorable and lifeless condition, have been enumerated by Dr Rankin as fourteen :—

1. From an early period, especially in the reigns of Alexander II., Alexander III., and James I., there had been irritation and political danger from interference by the Pope as a foreign power.

2. Scotland suffered continual pecuniary drain and deepening corruption, by so many clerics seeking promotion from Rome and paying for it there, like bidders at an auction.

3. The celibacy of the clergy, as an institution against nature, led to common concubinage and worse, whereby they lost the respect of the people, and provoked ceaseless jibing and ridicule in talk and song.

4. The degradation of so many of the sisters and daughters of the secondary lairds as clerical mistresses, stirred the secret resentment of those insulted families against an order which, in defiance of the first principles of the Gospel, used its wealth to promote seduction and lust.

5. The civil government of Scotland was too clerical, especially in the reign of James V., who distinctly irritated the nobles by favouring the clergy as his advisers.

6. Marriage, which means the framework of civil society, was cumbered by canon law, which forbade it within eight degrees of consanguinity, and along with consanguinity counted the relation of godfather and godmother, which had nothing to do with bodily sibness at all. These needless restrictions gave occasion to dispensations which, by their multiplicity, were not only an impoverishing drain from the charges attending them, but led to strife and further pecuniary waste in contested successions, both to private property and hereditary offices.

7. Clerics were not only responsible for an unworkably prohibitive marriage law, but were also arbiters of succession by means of the consistory courts of each bishop, drawing a fresh set of fees at this point, and pushing clerical influence into all property in one of its chief foundations—heredity.

8. The pecuniary pressure of the old Church was further felt in the extravagant powers possessed for collecting a full tithe, extending over the most recent improvements of both landlord and tenant, and including the first choice of grain from the harvest-field. Still more oppressive were the death-dues, in the shape of the “kirk cow” and the “upmost clath” or best bed-cover in the house of the bereaved for the priest. The doom of this abuse was sealed by Sir David Lindsay’s “Satire of the Three Estates,” especially the oft-quoted lines in Act II. scene i., where three deaths in succession—father, mother, and wife—deprived a poor pendicler of his whole stock of “three kye, baith fat and fair.”

9. For a considerable period before the crisis of 1560 the richest livings in the Church, especially in abbeys and priories, were habitually conferred on bastards, royal and noble, or on Court favourites, and these often mere children. Bishop Leslie names 1473 as the date of the origin of this abuse.

10. A very widespread source of weakness to the Church in the best part of its system was the absorption of so many parochial livings by the monasteries, which degraded the rural clergy by fostering a cheap and ill-educated class of men, who got only a fraction of the living, while they did the whole duty, in so far as it was done, or could be done, by them.

11. A special cause of loss of respect for the old Church was its extremely frequent use of "cursing," to terrify the people into payment of dues, or to make restitution, or to confirm their testimony, whereby the solemnities of discipline or excommunication became naturally the theme of mockery.

12. The Church's cruelty in punishing heresy by fire alienated men's sympathy from bishops and abbots to their victims. The proof of this is seen in the contemporary narratives of the martyrdoms of Patrick Hamilton, Resby, Craw, Wishart, and Mill.

13. The "sharp statutes" of the three reforming councils of the old Church itself, in 1549, 1552, and 1559, are alleged by Bishop Leslie to have had the effect of driving over many of the younger clergy to the new Church of the Lords of the Congregation, where priests were permitted to marry. The priests who crossed from the old Church to the new, whether from conviction or for convenience, or from the simple desire to abide among their parishioners as religious teachers, still were certainly a good many in number, and carried their ordination with them, and formed the nucleus of the Reformed Church of Scotland. Unfortunately we have no definite list of their names or parishes.

14. Not as a cause of weakness, but as a motive for assault, was the enormous wealth of the Church, which excited the covetousness of the Scots nobility, and led them effectively to combine for the Church's overthrow. Many were reformers for purity, but more were reformers for spoil, at least among the nobility and Parliament that carried the reform on 17th and 24th August 1560.¹

The corruption of the Church prior to the Reformation was so great, and created such a revulsion in the popular mind, that the Reformation in Scotland took an extreme form. The indignation, long pent up, became overwhelmingly intense, and it is by the

¹ The Church of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 420-423.

reaction, consequent upon such movements, that we are able to explain several of the peculiarities of the Scottish Reformation. We all deplore to-day the number of stately abbeys and beautiful churches that disappeared in 1560; we all wish that the reforming work had been done without such reckless destruction; yet we cannot but feel that the hatred towards the buildings arose from indignation against those who were associated with them. Professor Veitch has made the following observation:—

In connection with, and as an evidence of, the defect in even the cultured men of these times to appreciate the grand in nature or in art, there is, so far as I know, no reference in the poetry to the cathedral architecture of the country—the sculptured epics of the time. Alexander Barclay, in the times of James V., makes a reference to certain pictures on the wall of a cathedral church, somewhat in the spirit of censure (Sibbald, vol. ii. p. 409). Henryson, in “The Abbay Walk,” has a very sparing reference:—

“Allone as I went up and down
In ane Abbay was fair to see.”

—(Works, ed. Laing, p. 15.)

But I find no traces of sympathy for the power and grandeur of the noble piles of Melrose, Kelso, or Roslin, of Elgin, Dunblane, or Glasgow, though these were standing in those years in their unmutilated grace and symmetry. The irregularity and the sternness of mountain scenery may partly explain the aversion from it, but the harmonious regularity of the cathedral piles forbids this explanation of the indifference to them. Perhaps there was an aversion on the part of the lettered poets to the not always lettered clergy of the time; or perhaps it was that the Scottish mind had then, as now, a difficulty in fusing religious and æsthetical feeling. But what contemporary poets passed by in the fulness of its beauty and symmetry, Scott has pictured in ruins and renewed for the imagination of all time:—

“The moon on the east oriel shone
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliated tracery combined;
Thou wouldst have thought some fairy's hand
’Twixt poplars straight the osier wand,
In many a freakish knot, had twined;
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
And changed the willow wreaths to stone.”¹

¹ The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry, vol. i. pp. 115-117.

It is probably true to say that this difficulty in "fusing religious and æsthetic feeling" in Scotland is largely to be explained by the facts prior to the Reformation, which divorced religion from life, creed from conduct: it became the tenacious memory, deepened by the reaction, and separated the association of religion from the stately temples, where the guardians had so sadly deformed it. It is an instance of the law of association; and if poetry not only educated but reflected the consciousness of the people, we have in the early Scottish poetry an evidence of how corrupt the Church had long been, and how loudly it called for reform.

The leaders of the Church seem to have been the worst of all:—

The appointments to the Scottish bishoprics at this time throw a lurid light upon the condition of the Church. The good and the bad were strangely intermingled, but unhappily the bad predominated. Worse men than the bishops of the falling hierarchy never wore a mitre. It has often been said in Scotland that the strongest argument against Episcopacy was the episcopate. The bishops of this age give point to the remark.¹

Episcopacy had been retained in England because the bishops had taken part in the English Reformation. Episcopacy had ceased in Scotland because the bishops had not taken part in the Scottish Reformation.²

A contrast has been drawn between the Reformation in England and the Reformation in Scotland. In the one country, we are told, it was effected by the king, in the other by the people; in the one by despotic power, in the other by religious influence; in the one the primary object was to destroy the papal jurisdiction, in the other it was to purify the Church. The statement is one-sided. While the Reformation was in Scotland a more popular movement than it was in England, it was not altogether popular in the modern sense of the word. Dr Cunningham thinks we will approach nearer the truth if we say that it was baronial in Scotland as it was monarchical in England; that in the South the monarch was omni-

¹ Mr Stephen's History, p. 530.

² The Puritan Revolution, by S. R. Gardiner, p. 102.

potent, and reformed the Church; that in the North the barons were always a match for the throne, and taking the matter in hand accomplished the Reformation; that feudalism being at the time strong in Scotland, the faith of the lord became naturally that of the vassal.¹

Many of the lords and barons joined the Reforming party from sordid, worldly motives; but still the Reformation was brought about, and even the unmerciful plundering of Church property was not without its effect, and has been the means of creating forces which are slowly moulding politics, and are evidently still more destined to mould them in the future. It was unjust that the Church should be robbed of its property by those who were professing to do the work of God, but that was not without its Nemesis, as it was not without its influence: it has made the Scotland of to-day.

The struggle with poverty [says an able American historian] in its early life explains much in the history of the Scottish Kirk. It seemed at first a blighting misfortune that the new ministers could not step into the benefices of the old priests, devoting their lives to study and the intellectual as well as the spiritual edification of their flocks. But had such a scheme been carried out, Scotland would have had a very different history, for the Reformation there would probably have been as barren of results as it was under the established Church of England. The people were poor, ignorant, and but semi-civilised. Sermons to them, from ministers well clothed and sumptuously fed, would have produced as much effect as a lecture from the rich man to Lazarus on the beauties of humility and poverty. Upon the hillsides of Scotland, as on the plains of Judea, in its early days, Christianity came very close to the heart of the peasant or artisan, when its doctrines were preached by men no richer than himself, dependent for their subsistence on his voluntary contributions. Preacher and congregation were alike affected. Religion became, not an ornament, nor a formal creed, but the very life of the nation, and in this respect Scotland stands almost alone in history.

The action of the nobles in retaining the Church property produced also other results very important in the future. It made the common

¹ Church History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 277.

people religious, but, in addition, it helped to make them democratic. Logically carried out, Calvinism itself is democratic in its teachings, and this has given it political power.¹

Knox was the creative spirit in the Scottish Kirk; and the Kirk has made the Scottish people: their history is its history. "The Scottish commons," Froude well says, "are the sons of their religion," and the Kirk has made the people among the most outstanding in the world. There is a tribute to the Kirk in the tribute which Mr Hamerton gives to the Scottish people: "In proportion to their small numbers they are the most distinguished little people since the days of the ancient Athenians, and the most educated of the modern races."² The history of the Scottish people is not to be understood apart from the history of their Kirk; it is the Kirk, in its worshipful and educational aspects, which has made them,—which has breathed into them the strength to be what they have been, and to do what they have done.

The Reformation in Scotland was consummated by the Scottish Parliament on August 24, 1560: a new Creed or Confession of Faith was then adopted, while the Mass and papal jurisdiction were abolished in Scotland. This Confession of Faith continued from 1560 to 1647 the recognised standard of the Church of Scotland,³ and the spirit of it is well understood by the words of its preface, so much praised by Dean Stanley: "Protesting, that gif any man will note in this oure Confessioun any article or sentence repugning to Godis holie word, that it wald pleis him of his gentilnes, and for Christiane cherities saik, to admoneise us of the samyn in writt: and We of our honour and fidelitie do promeis unto him satisfioun fra the mouth of God (that

¹ *The Puritan in Holland, England, and America*, by Douglas Campbell, A.M., LL.B., vol. ii. p. 10.

² *French and English*, p. 437.

³ *Dr Rankin's Handbook of the Church of Scotland*, p. 152.

is, fra his holy Scriptures), or ellis reformatioun of that quhilk he sall prove to be amyss.”¹

The First Book of Discipline, or the Policy and Discipline of the Church, was drawn up by Knox, Spottiswood, Winram, Willock, and Row. Like the Confession, it belongs to 1560, but, unlike the Confession,² it was not accepted by the Scottish Parliament, but only by the Assembly. Dr Cunningham says of it: “No document could possibly throw more light upon the opinions of the Reformers. It is, in fact, the plan of the temple they designed to rear. If in anything our Church, as it now stands, differs from the Book of Discipline—if it has not the breadth of foundation, or height of pinnacle, or richness of ornament there indicated, it is because the after execution has fallen short of the original plan—it is because the builders who raised the fabric had not the same views as the architects who designed it.”³ “Their form of government,” says Professor Lindsay, “is closely inspired by Calvin’s ideas, and follows closely the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of the French Church.”⁴

The First Book of Discipline provided for the government of the Church by kirk-sessions, synods, and general assemblies; it recognised as office-bearers ministers, teachers, readers, elders, deacons, and superintendents. It divided the country into ten dioceses, that were to be presided over by ten superintendents.⁵

¹ The Works of John Knox, vol. ii. p. 96.

² “The Book of Discipline contains a chapter on the patrimony of the Church which urges the necessity of preserving monies possessed by the Church for the maintenance of religion, the support of education, and the help of the poor. The presence of this chapter prevented the book being accepted by the Estates in the same way as the Confession of Faith. The barons, greater and lesser, who sat there had in too many cases appropriated the ‘patrimony of the Kirk’ to their own private uses, and were unwilling to sign a document which condemned their own conduct. The Book of Discipline approved by the General Assembly, and signed by a large number of the nobles and burgesses, never received the legal sanction accorded to the Confession.”—The Reformation, by Professor Lindsay, D.D., p. 120.

³ Church History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 281.

⁴ The Reformation, p. 119.

⁵ Knox’s Works (Laing’s ed.), vol. ii. pp. 201-208.

The office of superintendent was a temporary expedient, due to the unsettled state of the country, and the duty assigned to him who received it was to erect kirks, appoint pastors in places hitherto unprovided, and give occasional benefit to parishes which did not enjoy the privilege of a fixed pastorate. The superintendents were to preach three times every week ; were not to remain longer than three or four months at a time in the chief town of the diocese where their own special work and residence were ; when on visitation they were to remain in one place not longer than twenty days ; they were to inquire into the conduct and work of the ministers, the religious condition of the people, the teaching of the young, the provision for the poor, and make annual reports to the General Assembly of the ecclesiastical and religious condition of their provinces. They had no special consecration beyond that of ordinary ministers, enjoyed no exclusive privilege in ordaining others, and were subject to the censure and correction of the provinces over which they presided.¹ The superintendents were not required to rise through the diaconate and priesthood to their office ; they might be, and in particular cases were, laymen admitted to the office.

Next to the superintendent came the minister, whose office was then as it is now. Every congregation was recognised as possessing the right to elect its own minister ; but if the election was neglected within forty days, the church " of the superintendent with his counsell " might present to them a man apt to feed the flock and examined in life and manners, doctrine and knowledge.²

That this may be done [continues the Book of Discipline] with moir exact diligence, the personis that ar to be examined must be commanded to compeir befor men of soundest jugement, remanying in some principall towne nyxt adjacent unto thame : as thai that be in Fyffe, Anguss, Inernyss or Straytherne, to present thame selfis in Sanctandros : . . . quhair first in the scoillis, or failling thair of in open assemblie, and befor the congre-

¹ Cunningham's History, vol. i. p. 283.

² Knox's Works, vol. ii. p. 189.

gatioun, thai most geve declaratioun of thair giftis, utterance and knowlege, by interpreting some place of Scripture to be appointed by the ministerie. Quhilk being ended, the persone that is presented, or that offered him self to the administratioun of the Kirk, must be examined by the ministeris and elderis of the Kirk, and that opinlie and befoir all that list to hear, in all the cheif pointes that now lie in contraversie betwix us and the Papistis, Anabaptistis, Arrians, or other suche ennemies to the Christiane religioun. In quhilk gif he be found sound, abill to persuade by hailsome doctryne, and to convince the gaynsayaris, then must he be directed to the Kirk and Congregatioun quhair he suld serve, that thair, in oppin audience of his flock, in diverse publict sermonis, he may gif confession of his faith in the articles of Justificatioun, of the office of Christ Jesus, of the nomber, effect, and use of the Sacraments; and, finallie, of the hoill religioun, quhilk heir-tofoir hath been corrupted by the Papistis.¹

A strange point in the ordination of ministers was that ordination, by the laying on of hands, was deliberately set aside, but in a few years this was altered. "Albeit the apostles used imposition of hands, yet seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremony we judge not necessary."²

As men with sufficient attainments to fill the office of minister could with difficulty be found immediately after the Reformation, men of inferior attainments, called readers, were temporarily employed. It was their duty to conduct the ordinary service of the Church, to read the Common Prayers and the Scriptures to the people, but they were not permitted to administer the sacraments. They were allowed to add explanatory or hortatory remarks, and might be raised to the status of minister, should their later experience and attainments justify it. "A trace of this early office," says Dr Rankin, "still meets us in the popular name of lectern or lettern, applied to the precentor's desk." In 1581 the order was abolished by the General Assembly.³

The elders were to be "men of best knowledge in God's Word and cleanest life, men faithful and of most honest conversation that could be found in the Church." It was their duty "to assist the

¹ Pp. 189, 190.² Dr Rankin's Handbook, p. 157.³ Ibid., pp. 157, 158.

ministers in all public affairs of the Kirk—to wit, in determining and judging causes, in giving admonition to the licentious liver, in having respect to the manners and conversation of all men within their charge.” “They ought also to take heed to the life, manners, diligence, and study of their ministers. If he be worthy of admonition, they must admonish him; of correction, they must correct him; and if he be worthy of deposition, they, with the consent of the Kirk and superintendent, may depose him, so that his crime deserve so.” The deacons were to “receive the rents and gather the alms of the Kirk, to keep and distribute the same as by the ministers and Kirk shall be appointed; they may also assist in judgment with the ministers and elders, and may be admitted to read in assembly if they be required and be able thereto.” The elders and deacons were elected annually, “least that by long continuance of such officers, men presume upon the liberty of the Church.”¹

As to the worship and discipline of the Kirk, it is declared to be necessary that the Word should be preached, the sacraments administered, common prayer publicly made, the young and ignorant instructed, and offenders punished. It is recommended that in the great towns there should be sermon or common prayers with reading of the Scriptures every day; that in the smaller towns one day beside the Sunday should be set apart for the same purpose. On the Sunday the Word was to be preached, the Communion was to be celebrated (at least four times each year), the children publicly catechised in the presence of the congregation, and for this purpose Calvin’s Catechism for the Young was translated, ordered to be used, and divided into sections for each Sunday. Days of fasting were substituted for Roman festivals, and the religious conceptions were more moulded after Old Testament ideas than New Testament ones; they were more Jewish than Christian.

In every town “where schools and repair of learned men are,”

¹ Book of Discipline, pp. 233-237.

there should be a weekly meeting for prophesying or interpreting the Scriptures. "In these meetings," says Dr Cunningham, "every man was to have liberty to speak, to offer interpretations of hard passages, to suggest doubts, to solve difficulties, but not to launch out into anything like preaching. The ministers in the neighbourhood were to attend these prophesyings, and at the close of the meeting to communicate to those who had spoken their opinion of the manner in which they had handled the matter."¹ "Thus," continues the Book of Discipline, "shall the Kirk have knowledge and judgment of the graces, gifts, and utterances of every man within their body; the simple, and such as have somewhat profited, shall be encouraged daily to study and to proceed in knowledge; and the whole Kirk shall be edified."

Catechumens were required to be able to repeat the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed before being admitted to the Lord's Table; baptism was administered in the church; marriage was to be performed "in open face and public audience of the church"² after the proclamation of banns upon a Sunday; the burial of the dead was to take place without any singing of mass, placebo, or dirge; no ceremony was to be used or funeral sermon preached, but "the dead committed to the grave with such gravity and sobriety as those that be present may seem to fear the judgments of God, and to hate sin, which is the cause of death."³

The Book of Common Prayer, or Knox's Liturgy, was used in Scotland in 1559, and was sanctioned by the Assembly in 1562. It was enlarged and improved in 1564, and gradually displaced the Liturgy of King Edward VI. In its improved form it was used throughout the Church until 1645. It ought to be remembered that a prayer-book was used in the services of the Scottish Church for eighty-five years.⁴

¹ Church History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 286.

³ Ibid., p. 250.

² Knox's Works, vol. ii. p. 248.

⁴ Dr Rankin's Handbook, p. 164.

At this stage the Church had neither synods nor presbyteries, but only the kirk-session and General Assembly. Dr Rankin thinks that the germ of the synod was in the council of the superintendent, and the germ of the presbytery in what was called the exercise—exercise with additions or weekly exercise.¹

Preaching was the outstanding influence in the Scottish Reformation, and Protestantism has done its best work through preaching. It was pre-eminently necessary immediately after the Reformation, and ever since it has held an outstanding place in Scotland. The chief Reformers were all preachers, and it was by the living voice that they called forth, sustained, and directed the sympathy and intelligence of the people. It is from a consciousness of the work it has accomplished, as well as from a sense of the penetrative and far-reaching influence which it still wields, that preaching has ever since in Scotland been regarded as a most important part of the sanctuary service. The reverence that pervades a Scottish congregation also shows that they do not neglect the worshipful aspect of the service.

It was a necessary part of the Reformers' work to regard the Church as a great teacher of the people, for the old Church had left the bulk of them ignorant and superstitious. Their ideal was a return to a simpler and purer time, when the Church was an educational institute—an aspect which distinguished it from the temples of Greece and Italy, where sacrifice and ritual were the outstanding features of the worship. Well has it been remarked, that in tracing the causes of the rapid advance of Christianity, Gibbon has omitted one of the most powerful—an inspired eloquence. The decline of preaching has always been the decline of the Church.

After the sixth century [says a scholar] preaching began to decline. Sacramentalism was choking it out. The darkness of the Dark Ages was coming on. Before the eighth century bishops had almost ceased to preach;

¹ Dr Rankin's Handbook, p. 163.

even parish priests preached seldom. On the outskirts of Christendom zealous missionaries were still preaching and driving back paganism; and in the thirteenth century the Dominicans or preaching friars were instituted; it was the first ray of returning light: and it must have been a great day in the parish church when the black-gowned Dominican took his place in the pulpit and harangued the people on the verities of indulgences and the merits of the saints. So things continued until the Reformation, when preaching a second time revolutionised the world.¹

What the same scholar again says is pre-eminently true of Scotland before the Reformation:—

When the darkness of the medieval centuries deepened, the priests became almost as ignorant as their parishioners; for their office only required that they should be able to read, perchance with stammering tongue, their missal and their breviary. But people must know something of the religion they professed, and hence pictures representative of Bible scenes were introduced into the churches—Madonnas and Magdalenes, Crucifixions and Ascensions, the Adoration of the Magi and the Assumption of the Virgin. At a later period the clergy introduced dramatic representations with a similar view, and in them they taught the grotesque theology of the time—the descent of Christ into hell, and His fierce combat with the devil on his own ground, being one of the favourite subjects. Such strange developments did the service of the Church exhibit, and yet they always had a relation to the Church's surroundings.²

It was by the force of intellect and the depth of spiritual sincerity accompanied by the living voice that the Reformers aroused Scotland, and the Reformation in Scotland was both the quickening of spiritual life and the expansion of intellectual life in the people. The Reformers perceived the need, and they satisfied it not only by a living pulpit but also by their splendid school system,—the very best to be found anywhere.

The Celtic monastery, we have already seen, was an educational centre, efficient in its day; the Roman Church, that succeeded it, did also much for the cause of education, which no one can deny who desires to give an impartial judgment; still the ideal of the

¹ *The Growth of the Church*, by Dr John Cunningham, p. 142.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 310, 311.

Reformers was not behind in this important matter, and to them we owe the parochial system of school education, which has done so much for Scotland. Every church was to have its own minister, and to every church there was to be attached a school; in every large town, especially those where the superintendents resided, there was to be a college or grammar-school: it was also agreed that the Universities of Glasgow, St Andrews, and Aberdeen should be liberally endowed; that a fourth, the University of Edinburgh, should be founded.

Off necessitie thairfore [says the Book of Discipline] we judge it, that everie severall Church have a Scholmaister appointed, suche a one as is able, at least, to teache Grammer and the Latine tounge, yf the Toun be of any reputioun. Yf it be Upaland, whaire the people convene to doctrine bot once in the weeke, then must eathir the Reidar or the Minister thair appointed, take cayre over the children and youthe of the parische, to instruct them in thair first rudimentis, and especiallie in the Catechisme, as we have it now translaited in the Booke of our Common Ordour, callit the Ordour of Geneva. And farther, we think it expedient, that in everie notable toun, and especiallie in the toun of the Superintendent, [there] be erected a Colledge, in whiche the Artis, at least Logick and Rethorick, togidder with the Tongues, be read be sufficient Maisteris, for whome honest stipendis must be appointed; as also provisioun for those that be poore, and be nocht able by them selfis, nor by thair friendis, to be sustened at letteris, especiallie suche as come frome Landwart.¹

In emphasising education by school and college, the Reformers did not forget to attach importance to the education in the home:—

Everie Maister of houshald must be commandit eathir to instruct, or ellis caus to be instructed, his children, servandis, and familie, in the principallis of the Christiane religioun; without the knowlege whair of aught none to be admitted to the Tabill of the Lord Jesus; for suche as be so dull and so ignorant, that thei can neathir try thame selfis, neathir yit know the dignitie and misterie of that actioun, can not eat and drink of that Tabil worthelie.²

¹ Knox's Works, vol. ii. pp. 209, 210.

² Ibid., p. 241.

It was also a part of their work to provide for the sustenance of the poor. The Church was to the Reformers not only a worshipful, educative institution—it was also to be a beneficent one. Scotland, both before and after the Reformation, swarmed with beggars; the Book of Discipline provided that the strong and able-bodied should be compelled to work, and that the aged and infirm should return to their native parishes and there be sustained.

The Reformers intended the patrimony of the Kirk to be applied to the support of religion, education, and the relief of the poor; but their scheme was much crippled by the rapacity of the nobles, who appropriated the property belonging to the Church, which is said at the period prior to the Reformation to have possessed about one-half of the whole land in the country. There were many protests made, but in vain: at last the Assembly prevailed upon the Estates to declare that those persons retaining Church lands were to retain two-thirds for their own private use, and with the remaining third provide for the ministry, education, and support of the poor. The Reformed Church, however, found it difficult to enforce the law, and received support immediately after the Reformation from the freewill offerings of the people—from “benevolences,” as Knox describes such subsidies.

Well has Principal Lee said:—

If the Reformers had been allowed to carry their plans into execution, a great proportion of the rents of the bishoprics would have been applied to the support of literary institutions, as well as to the due sustentation of the parochial clergy. Their destination of these funds was indeed intercepted by the avarice of men of power; but though the enlightened views which they had endeavoured to impress upon the Parliament were thus frustrated, it is certainly most unfair to charge upon the Reformers the discredit of an effect to which they not only did not contribute, but which they laboured strenuously to counteract. They had the best interests of learning deeply at heart; and if their counsel had been followed, no country in the world would have been so well supplied as Scotland with

the means of extending the benefits of a liberal education to every man capable of intellectual improvement.¹

Such is a general statement of the Church in Scotland at the Reformation, and in its light we will now seek to understand the special features of the parish of Abernethy as they present themselves to us at the period.

As to the destruction of Church property, we have no very explicit statement, and to-day we can be thankful that the tower did not disappear in the general work of demolition. Dempster, writing in 1622, distinctly refers to sculptured stones in the walls of Abernethy church, "lately profaned and abolished by the heretics";² and no doubt he refers to the rabble that marched from Perth with a view of destroying the neighbouring abbeys of Lindores and Balmerino. On their way they evidently did not leave Abernethy collegiate church untouched; it seems most probable that they destroyed the choir and the many relics which the church must have contained. They demolished the Macduff Cross; and it is probably owing to the fact that the Mugdrum Cross was within the enclosed policies of Mugdrum estate that it was able to survive. While we regret what was lost at Abernethy, there is far greater cause for regret that the fair and stately abbeys of Lindores and Balmerino were not spared from such ruthless hands.³

As to the Church lands, there was not occasion in Abernethy

¹ History of the Church of Scotland, vol. i. p. 200.

² Menologium Scoticum, Forbes's 'Kalendars,' p. 205.

³ "Iconoclasm is a notable feature in the Scottish Reformation. . . . Knox's plea was 'that the best way to keep the rooks from returning is to pull down their nests,' but the rooks will return, even if ye pull down their nests; and it is a poor revenge against a living evil to attack its dead symbol: in the mere violence of demolition God is not served, while the fair work of man is dishonoured and destroyed.

"The spirit of the highest reform is everywhere the reverse of this. It attacks the corrupt life, or seeks to breathe health into it. It busies itself with essentials and lets alone accidents. The form will by-and-by adapt itself to the altered spirit. It was not merely a misfortune, therefore—it was a mistake, this iconoclasm of the Reformation. There is nothing to say for it on any general grounds of reason."—Principal Tulloch on Reformers, p. 398.

for much appropriation. We have already seen that the large territory given by King Nectan to the church of Abernethy, "until the judgment day," had centuries before the Reformation been secularised and appropriated. It was again a burgh of barony inhabited by a sturdy race of independent people, who possessed a large part of its territory, and were not likely to permit any "Lord of the Congregation" to interfere with their possessions. There is, however, something to state regarding the land endowments attached to the prebends. The college consisted of a provost and seven prebendaries, but we have now no opportunity of learning definitely how long the prebendaries continued to officiate after 1560. We have already considered two charters, however (see pp. 294, 295), in which James VI. confirms a private transaction between the provost and prebendaries of the collegiate church of Abernethy, whereby for sums of money privately received they dispose of the lands to a neighbouring proprietor, George Auchinleck of Balmanno. Prebendary Schaw led the way in this matter, and his charter proceeds upon the narrative "that the ecclesiastical service to which the said college was devoted had been abolished, and that the residence and service of those having its care was no longer necessary."¹ His charter is dated March 5, 1572-73, and his example was followed by his brethren (*confratres*), for in November 14, 1577, we find them doing likewise, and disposing of the Church lands to the same proprietor.² It gives one a glimpse into the unsettled conditions of the period, that public officials should have been able privately to dispose of lands that belonged to the Church, and receive a charter from the king, with the consent of those whose interests were involved in the transaction, confirming their private bargains. The dates of the charters would lead us to infer that for several years after the great event of 1560 the collegiate clergy still held by the Church lands, until at last they were able to dispose of them in favour of their

¹ R.M.S., 1546-80, p. 557, No. 2125.

² Ibid., pp. 747, 748, No. 2737.

own interests. As to whether any of the clergy became Protestant ministers, we have now no opportunity of knowing.

Between 1560 and 1570 the interests of the Reformed Church seem to have been guarded by the superintendent at St Andrews, who would supply ordinances occasionally in person and at other times by deputy. In the Register of St Andrews Kirk-Session we find the mention of discipline cases connected with Abernethy. In one of them there is mention of an Archibald Dundas in Pote, who "submittis hym to the ordinance and disciplin of the Kyrk," and at a later sederunt "the said Archebald be supplicacion to be committed in the handis of his magistrat quhom to he is subject, vidz., the ballie of Abyrnethe."¹ This happened in 1562. In another case (1563), the superintendent "ordenis Alexander [Duncan] to mak public satisfaction in the essemble of Abyrnethe, this nixt Sunday, for his sclander and wrangus persut."² In the third case (1564), two parishioners (one a Schyr Alexander Gaw) are "summond to underly disciplyn; and nocht comperand ar noted contumaces and letteres decernit upon tham in forme of excommunicacion, to be execut according to the order of the Kyrk."³

These examples show how strong was the discipline of the Reformed Church, and how efficiently it faced the problem of raising the moral tone of the people. Righteousness and social purity were always before them, and although the task was herculean, they endeavoured to discharge it.

The first minister of the Reformed Church at Abernethy of whom we have any definite mention is Mr PATRICK GALT. He was minister in 1570, with a stipend of "foure score pounds and twentie pounds mair sin Lammas 1569," and was assisted by Mr

¹ St Andrews Kirk-Session Register, vol. i. pp. 139, 140 (Scottish History Society Series).

² *Ibid.*, p. 182.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

John Weemys as Reidar.¹ The only evidence that still remains of him is receipt of stipend to Lady Jane Lyndsay of Balvaird, written in a beautiful hand, and pointing to the fact that he must have been a man of considerable education:—

I Patrick Galt minister of Abernethie grants me resavit fra ane honourable Ladye Dame Janat Lyndsay four merks money for her small tiends of the vicarage pertinand to the Lands of Balvaird for the thrie scoir twelve years. Off the quhilk sum I hold me weill contentit and pait. Be this my acquittance subscrivit wth my hand at Balvaird the 11th day of June anno 1573.

PATRICK GALT.²

Patrick Galt was translated to Edrom in 1574.³ There is, however, a reminder of the hours of this good man's services. After the Reformation and for the ordinary church service, three bells were rung,—the first to indicate that the hour of worship was near, and that the people ought to be preparing for it; the second, to tell that the reader's service was about to begin; the third, for the sermon. These three ringings are still continued in the parish, and their original meaning is not much known in Abernethy, as in other parishes.⁴ During Mr Galt's ministry, however, the first bell at eight on the Sunday morning was a call to prepare for church; the second, at 10 A.M., was a call to the reader's exposition of Scripture; the third, at 11.30 A.M., was a call to sermon. The reader's services are now no longer part of the Sunday's service; but every Sunday the three bells are rung, and at the last (11.30 A.M.) public worship begins in the churches. It is an interesting example of the tenacity of an old custom, that the other year, when for a few weeks the second bell was not rung, many spoke of it, and at last the old order was restored. May it always survive as an interesting link with the past.

¹ MS. Register of Ministers in Advocate's Library.

² I am indebted for this to the Rev. John Wilson, minister of Methven, who sent it to me after receiving it from Colonel Smythe of Methven.

³ *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, part iv. p. 623.

⁴ *The Ritual of the Church of Scotland*, by Rev. Dr Leishman, p. 329.

The question may be asked, What form did these services take? and no clearer answer can be given than by quoting an old work in the form of a dialogue, entitled 'Conference between a Catholic Christian and a Catholic Roman.' The work is controversial, and was published between 1612 and 1619 by Bishop Cowper of Galloway. The Romanist is taken by his friend to a Scottish church on Sunday morning, and the following dialogue ensues:—

R. What is this the people are going to do?

C. They bow themselves before the Lord, to make an humble confession of their sins, and supplications for mercy, which you will hear openly read out by the public reader. Now, when it is done, what think you of the prayer?

R. Truly I think there is nothing in it, but that whereunto every good Christian should say Amen: and it hath done me much good to see the people, with humble reverence sighing and groaning, accompany the prayer up to God. But what go they now to do?

C. Every one is preparing (as you see) their Psalm book, that all of them, with one heart and mouth, may sing unto the Lord. There is the psalm which the reader hath proclaimed; if you please you may sing with them, or if you cannot, follow them in your heart.

R. So I will. What doth the reader now? is he making another prayer?

C. No. Yonder book which now he opens is the Bible. You will hear him read some portion of Holy Scripture. Understand you what he saith?

R. Yes, forsooth, well enough, for he reads very distinctly.

C. These are the three exercises which are used in all our congregations every Sabbath, one hour before the preacher comes in: first prayer, then psalms, then reading of Holy Scripture; and by these the hearts of the people are prepared the more reverently to hear the Word, and you see all is done with great quietness, devotion, and reverence.

R. I see that, indeed. . . . But what are they doing now?

C. You hear the third bell ringing, and in this space the reading ceaseth, and at the end of the bell-ringing the preacher will come.

R. (After some discussion.) But we must let this alone, for there comes the preacher. And now, I pray you, tell me how I should behave myself?

C. Trouble you not, do as you see others beside you; for first he will conceive a prayer, at the which the people humble themselves; there-after he reads his text of Holy Scripture, this the people hear with reverence; then he falls to the preaching, which some hear with their heads covered, some otherwise; in that you may do as your health requires: the preaching being ended, he concludes all with a thanksgiving, after which there is a psalm sung by the whole congregation, and then the minister blesseth the people in the name of the Lord, and so demits them. You will see no other thing here.¹

Henderson, in his 'Government and Order of the Church of Scotland,' published in 1641, gives an account almost similar in its description:—

When so many of all sorts, men and women, masters and servants, young and old, as shall meet together, are assembled, the public worship beginneth with prayer and reading some portion of the Holy Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, which the people hear with attention and reverence; and after reading, the whole congregation joineth in singing some psalm. This reading and singing do continue till the preaching begin; at which time the minister, having prefaced a little for quickening and lifting up the hearts of the people, first maketh a prayer for remission of sin, sanctification, and all things needful, joining also confession of sins and thanksgiving with special relation to the hearers. After which in the forenoon is another psalm, and after the psalm a prayer for a blessing upon the preaching of the Word. . . . After sermon he praiseth God, and prayeth again for a blessing, joining earnest petitions for the Church universal, and for the coming of the kingdom of Christ; for all the afflicted churches, for the churches in his Majesty's dominion, for the Church of Scotland, ministry, and people; for the King, the Queen, the Prince, and their whole royal progeny; for all the members of that particular congregation, as well absent in their lawful affairs as present; for all that are afflicted among them, in body, mind, or means. The prayer ended, a psalm is sung, and the people dismissed with a blessing.

In 1574 Abernethy, along with Dumbarnie, Poty, Moncrieffe, Dron, Rhynd, Eglismagirdil, and Arngask, were under the pastoral superintendence of PATRICK WEEMYS, with "reidars" under him

¹ Quoted in Dr Leishman's *Ritual of the Church*, pp. 337, 338.

at these several places, with the exception of Poty, Moncrieffe, and Dron, which, as the record states, "neidis na reidars." John Weemys, who, as Dr Wilson thinks, may be the son of Patrick, was still "reidar" at Abernethy, with a salary of £36, 13s. 4d., with the kirk lands.¹

The next minister of Abernethy was Mr ARCHIBALD MONCRIEFF; but before dealing with his ministry and that of his immediate successors, it will be necessary to state the general history of the Church of Scotland during this and the subsequent period:—

It is sometimes said [Professor Veitch remarks] that Scotland carries no lesson for history. Nothing is less true. Its lesson is, first, the power of individualism, and latterly that of the rights of conscience. It was well, not only for Britain but for Europe, that there was one people at least who from the first could not brook and had the spirit to withstand government by unqualified prerogative and the arrogance of feudal domination. It was a grand human instinct which led them to feel that the will of one man never could be counted upon as a righteous law for the nation.²

Individualism and the assertion of the rights of conscience are written in Scottish history, and they stand forth conspicuously clear in the period with which we have now to deal.

At the Concordat of Leith, in 1572, the whole character of the Scottish Church as designed by Knox was changed by six members of the Privy Council and six ministers, who resolved themselves into a convention, without any authority from the General Assembly, yet arrogating the power of the Assembly. These twelve agreed "that the names and titles of archbishops and bishops are not to be altered or innovate, nor yet the bounds of the dioceses confounded; but to stand and continue in time coming as they did before the reformation of religion—at least to

¹ The Presbytery of Perth, p. 15; Fasti Eccles. Scot., p. 623; Wodrow Mis., vol. i.

² History and Poetry of the Scottish Border, p. 276.

the king's majesty's majority or consent of Parliament." "That there be a certain assembly or chapter of learned ministers annexed to every metropolitan or cathedral seat." They also agreed that archbishops and bishops should possess the power in spiritual matters that superintendents had "until the same be agreed upon"; "that all archbishops and bishops be subject to the Kirk and General Assembly thereof *in spiritualibus*, as they are to the king *in temporalibus*." The object aimed at was the acquisition of Church wealth by "needy and greedy" noblemen, and it was reluctantly confirmed by the Assembly held at Perth in 1572. The new bishops (being bishops only in name, when the Church revenues went to the lay lords who nominated them) were called ironically "tulchan bishops": the struggle against them began in 1572 and continued to 1580, when the Assembly repudiated them. The leader in this movement was Andrew Melville, and it was under his leading and influence that the Second Book of Discipline was formed. In 1575 the Assembly defined the term "bishop" as rightly belonging to any one who had the charge of a flock, but at the same time acknowledged that some of these might be made superintendents or overseers for a district. In 1578 territorial names or titles were prohibited to bishops, and they were restricted to their own proper names. In 1578 Morton resigned the regency and the king assumed the reins of government; he was under the influence of favourites, and was not favourable to Presbytery. In 1580 the Assembly of Dundee declared the bishop's office unlawful. In 1581 the document known as the Second Confession of Faith was sanctioned, and was signed by the king. It was printed as the first part of the National Covenant. In 1582 took place the Raid of Ruthven, when the king was made prisoner at Huntingtower by Gowrie, Mar, Glamis, and others. In 1583 the king escaped, and the raid was declared treason. Gowrie was executed, and Melville fled. In 1584 Parliament passed the Black Acts, which sanctioned Episcopacy by penal sanctions. I. The ancient jurisdiction of the three Estates was

ratified (one of the three being the bishops), and to speak evil of any of them was treason. II. The king was supreme in all causes and over all persons, and to decline his judgment was treason. III. All convocations not specially licensed by the king were unlawful. IV. The chief jurisdiction of the Church lies with the bishops. V. "None shall presume, privately or publicly, in sermons, declamations, or familiar conferences, to utter any false, untrue, or slanderous speeches, to the reproach of his majesty or council, or meddle with the affairs of his Highness and Estate, under the pains contained in the Acts of Parliament made against the makers and reporters of lies."¹ These Acts were passed on May 22, 1584; in August the Estates met and passed another—that all ministers, readers, and masters of colleges should compare within forty days and subscribe the Acts concerning the king's jurisdiction over all matters, temporal and spiritual; as well as submit themselves to the bishops, under pain of being deprived of their stipends.

In 1586 a compromise was formed: in 1587 the temporalities of the sees were annexed to the Crown—an act which uprooted Episcopacy by taking away the means of supporting it. The General Assembly expressed itself as irreconcilable to oppression, and in 1590 the king made the speech so damaging in the light of subsequent acts to his reputation, in which he praised God that he was the king in such a Kirk, "the sincerest Kirk in the world," and promised "so long as I brook my life and crown, I shall maintain the same against all deadly." In 1592 the Magna Charta of Presbytery was passed, the Acts of 1584 abrogated, in so far as they interfered with the liberty of the Church; presentations to vacant benefices were to be directed not to the bishop, but to the presbytery within the bounds of which the benefice was situated. The chief parts of the Second Book of Discipline were thus sanctioned, and the erection of presbyteries was ratified by Parlia-

¹ Dr Rankin's Handbook, p. 175.

ment. Under the newer arrangement the offices of superintendent and reader are dropped, and four offices are recognised: (1) minister (or bishop); (2) doctor (or teacher); (3) elder (or presbyter); (4) deacon.

Presbytery thus attained the victory after a long struggle, and it was in the Assembly the voice of the people found its expression,—that their rights were vindicated, and their privileges conserved. But the struggle was not yet ended. “When we start again,” says Dr Rankin, “from the date of 1596, we enter on a long period of struggle divided into two parts. The first is from 1596 to 1638, at which point Presbytery was triumphant in the National Covenant and in the General Assembly at Glasgow. The second is from 1638, through the darkest period of both our ecclesiastical and civil history under Cromwell and Charles II., to the Revolution of 1688.”¹

In 1597 the king attempted to procure a standing commission of ministers to vote in Parliament as bishops. In 1600 the Assembly at Montrose agreed to regulations as to the election and maintenance of ministers to vote in Parliament, and the chief of these was, that on a vacancy the king should select one from a leet of six given by the Church. In 1603 James succeeded Elizabeth, and held the famous Hampton Court Conference in 1606. His policy was ever afterwards guided by his saying, “No bishop, no king.” In 1606 Parliament confirmed the king’s prerogative, restored the temporal estate of bishops, without any regard to the caveats of Assembly. The Assembly at Linlithgow agreed to “constant moderators” under limitations, but it was afterwards objected that this was not a regular Assembly. The Synods of Fife, Lothian, and Merse refused constant moderators.² In 1610 bishops were conse-

¹ Handbook of the Church of Scotland, p. 182.

² It was well that the Church in England at this period was not disunited and rent asunder by the controversies that perplexed Scotland, as will be seen from what Dr James Hamilton so well says :—

“When in 1611, and after seven years of affectionate industry, King James’s Bible

crated in London for Scotland—Spottiswood, Lamb, and Hamilton; on arriving in Scotland, they consecrated other ten. In 1617, after a thirteen years' absence, the king came to Edinburgh; in June he submitted a proposal which practically abolished Presbytery, "that whatsoever his majesty should determine touching the external government of the Church, with the advice of the archbishops, bishops, and a competent number of the clergy, should have the strength of law." In 1618 open discussion was not allowed at Perth, and the Five Articles were passed: they were ratified in Parliament during 1621. In 1625 the king died. Principal Cunningham says of him:—

In Scotland he was not greatly lamented save by the bishops who had sprung up in the sunshine of his favour, and the few hungry nobles who haunted his Court, grew rich upon English spoil, and brought upon their native country the reproach of beggary. He abandoned Presbytery to overturn its government and persecute its ministers; he embraced Prelacy to purge it from Puritanism; and lost the esteem of one nation without gaining the respect of another. His foolish ideas of the divine right of kings, and of the extent of his prerogative, laid the foundation of those disasters which brought his son to the scaffold, and drove his race from the throne. English adulation, opulence, and power developed his vices, and

appeared, it was probably the ripest result of sanctified learning ever given to the world.

"There was a remarkable providence in the timing of this translation. Had it been delayed a few years longer, it must have emanated from a sect, and must have borne the impress of religious controversy. But at the outset of the seventeenth century there was no open schism in English Protestantism. Reynolds and Chaderton, the Puritans, sat in the same committees with Abbot, Andrewes, Overall, and Sanderson, men who wore, or were destined to wear, the mitre; and such were the acknowledged ability and conscientiousness of the divines and scholars to whom the sacred task was intrusted, that their work scarcely drew forth a single cavil at the time, and, before half a century had elapsed, it had superseded every rival. The Pilgrim Fathers took it in the Mayflower to New England in 1620; and instead of remaining a mere British Bible, it is now the Bible of the fifty millions of the English-speaking world, the standard of our language, and the storehouse of those glorious truths and spirit-stirring watchwords which bind the scattered members of the Anglo-Saxon family to one another."—*Our Christian Classics*, vol. i. p. 156.

choked up his virtues. His youth was more virtuous than his old age; and profligacy in the old is peculiarly repulsive.¹

Charles I. succeeded his father in 1625, and was as injudicious in his attitude towards the Scottish Church. Under the guidance of Laud, he endeavoured to force Anglican customs, and did so in such a high-handed manner as to render them distasteful: he introduced Laud's Prayer-Book without the approval of the Assembly, and such was the commotion produced that it was everywhere rejected. Prosecution for disobedience followed, and so great was the indignation felt that the Four Tables (nobility, gentry, clergy, and burghers) were formed to vindicate national liberty. Their chief work was the National Covenant, solemnly signed in Greyfriars' Churchyard, March 1, 1638.

The famous Glasgow Assembly met on November 21, 1638, when Alexander Henderson was Moderator. The Five Articles of Perth, the Service-Book, the Book of Canons, were both abjured and condemned; the bishops were either excommunicated, deposed, or suspended.² This work is known as the Second Reformation.

The action of the Glasgow Assembly almost brought about a civil war, but a peace was agreed upon at Berwick on the basis of a free Assembly and a Parliament to follow. This took place, and the Assembly ratified the work of the Covenanters. Civil war burst out in England, and the Covenanters joined hands with the English Puritans. "An Assembly at St Andrews in July of the same year," says Dr Rankin, "continued the diseased craving for uniformity;"³ the Covenanters desired to have the same system of Church government established in England as in Scotland, and in 1643 there was drawn up "the Solemn League and Covenant for Reformation and Defence of Religion, the Honour and Happiness of the King, and the Peace and Safety of the Three Kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland."

¹ Church History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 494.

² The Church of Scotland, by Dr Muir, p. 41.

³ Handbook, p. 193.

"The drift of this document," says Dr Muir, "was more aggressive than that of the previous Covenant, with which it is often confounded. The National Covenant was mainly defensive; the Solemn League and Covenant aimed also at 'the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism,' and at 'the discovery of all such as have been or shall be incendiaries, malignant or evil instruments, by . . . making any faction contrary to this League and Covenant; that they may be brought to public trial and receive condign punishment.'" ¹ It was signed in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, by the Lords and Commons, and by the Assembly of Divines which had then begun its sittings. It was sent for signature over the length and breadth both of England and Scotland, all who refused to sign being threatened with ecclesiastical censures and civil penalties. In England it was disapproved by the saintly Richard Baxter. In the south-west of Scotland it met with enthusiastic favour; but in the north, especially in Aberdeenshire, it was coldly received; and, in consequence of his refusal to subscribe, the devout and learned theologian, Dr John Forbes of Corse, Professor of Divinity in King's College, Aberdeen, was, "to the grudge and grief of the best, forced along with others to flee the country." ²

It is to this same period we owe the books that serve as the standards of doctrine and government in the Church of Scotland—the Westminster Confession of Faith,³ the Larger and Shorter Catechism, and the Directory of Public Worship. The Scottish Commissioners in the Westminster Assembly were Baillie, Henderson, Rutherford, Gillespie, Johnston of Warriston, Cassilis, Maitland,

¹ The Church of Scotland, p. 42.

² Ibid., pp. 41, 42.

³ "The Westminster," says Dean Stanley, "is the latest born of all Confessions, and reflects more than any other the hair-splitting and straw-dividing distinctions which had reached their height in the Puritanical theology of that age, and which in sermons ran into the 16th and 17th sections, that so exercised the soul of Dugald Dalgetty, as he waited for the conclusion of the discourse in the chapel of Inverary Castle."—Lectures on the Church of Scotland.

Argyll, Balmerinoch, Loudon, Meldrum, and Winram. At this period, and probably owing to the Westminster Assembly influence, the use of Knox's Liturgy was discontinued in the Kirk. "The king disliked the old Prayer-Book, the people disliked the new, and the consequence of the quarrel has been to deprive Scotland of a Prayer-Book altogether."¹ "We may see nothing very wrong in most of the Articles of Perth, or in some parts of the Laudian Liturgy, but all the same we must applaud a people who resented these illegal interferences with its national religion."²

Civil war broke out, and the king's cause in Scotland was led by the Marquis of Montrose, who signed the Covenant of 1638, although he became a deadly opponent to the Solemn League and Covenant. He was defeated by General Leslie at Philiphaugh, September 13, 1645. Charles I. sought shelter in Scotland, but unfortunately he was handed over to the English. He was beheaded at Whitehall on January 30, 1649. Montrose met with a similar end, and declared in expectation of death, "The Covenant which I took I own it and declare it. Bishops, I care not for them. I never intended to advance their interest. But when the king had granted you all your desires, and you were every one sitting under his vine and under his fig-tree, that then you should have taken a party in England by the hand, and entered into a League and Covenant with them against the king, was the thing I judged it my duty to oppose to the yondmost."³

The period of the Commonwealth extended from 1649 to 1660. Cromwell routed the Covenanters at Dunbar, forbade the General Assembly, and assumed the control of the Church. His power was increased by the dissensions within the Church itself, and the existence of two parties, the Resolutioners and Protesters. The former were willing to admit to office such as might have been opposed to the Covenant; the latter were intolerant towards

¹ Dr Cunningham's History, p. 518.

² Ibid., p. 522.

³ "Montrose and the Covenanters," Blackwood's Magazine, November 1887.

such a movement. The leaders of the Resolutioners were Douglas, Dickson, and Baillie; the leaders of the Protesters, Gillespie, Guthrie, and Samuel Rutherford. Cromwell was in favour of the Protesters, and with his help they obtained a dominant influence in the Church.

To ingratiate themselves with Cromwell, the Protesters declined praying for the king, and framed their churches after the model of the sectarians. They introduced a mode of celebrating the divine ordinances which till that time had been unknown in Scotland, and which came afterwards to be generally practised by those whose meetings were interdicted by the severe enactments of the Government after the king's restoration. They preached and prayed at much greater length and with much greater fervour than their brethren. At the administration of the Communion they collected a great number of ministers, and performed divine service two or three successive days before, and one at least after, the solemnity.¹

These words of Principal Lee describe how deeply English Puritanism coloured the Scottish Church. The movement towards the later severity was not from within but from without the Church. "With all this vitality," says Dr Cunningham, "there was an utter want of that loving, liberal spirit which is the highest phase of the religious life. Some of the worst bigotries which have come down to the present day were then born."²

Monarchy was restored in 1660, and Episcopacy was restored in 1661. Charles II. had sworn to the Solemn League and Covenant, but it was soon seen what value was to be attached to his promise. Argyll, Warriston, and James Guthrie were beheaded, and in 1661 the Scottish Parliament passed the Rescissory Act, which at one stroke undid the legislation of the last twenty years. The Act virtually restored Episcopacy, and severities were begun against the Presbyterians. There was the repetition of King James's bishops of 1610, and Sharpe, Fairfoul, Hamilton, and Leighton were consecrated and reordained at Westminster

¹ History of the Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 309.

² Church History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 77.

Abbey. Leighton desired to reconcile Presbytery and Episcopacy ; his mind, of a mystical, spiritual type, attached little importance to questions of Church government. He was the most noble-minded of the bishops, as Sharpe was the most time-serving. His finest Scottish interpreter, Dr Walter C. Smith, has said of him :—

Here was a servant of God who found himself strangely ranged on the devil's side in the great conflict of the age, though fully minded all the while to fight the battle of the Lord. That is the problem, settle it as we may. For, that the struggle of those days involved constitutional government, liberty of conscience, and true religion in this land, is surely past all question now among men who think, or who have any tolerable capacity for thinking. I am no mere eulogist of the popular party, . . . but I know no men in history who could be more fitly described as "The Wicked" than Charles and James ; Lauderdale and Melfort ; Fairfoul, Sydserf, and Claverhouse, *et hoc genus omne*. Yet, side by side with them, we find honourable statesmen like Tweeddale and Murray the founder of the Royal Society ; a bishop like Leighton, and pious divines like Burnett, Charteris, and Forbes of Corse—all men of blameless repute and high moral purpose.¹

He also places the struggles of the Covenanters in their true light :—

In England liberty depended on a free Parliament, in Scotland its foundation was a free Assembly. While the great statesmen of the South, therefore, contended for the privileges of the Lower House, in the North the patriot party fought for the rights of the Ecclesiastical Courts,—both having precisely the same end in view. For in Scotland there never was a Parliament, in the English sense of the word. We had a thing, indeed, of the same name, as they had in France, from which ours was borrowed ; but it was a mere court for registering the royal decrees. The people never looked to it for help. No free debate there ever discussed a national grievance. Constituted as it was, and restricted by the Lords of the Articles, it never could be anything but a tool of the party in power. The only free popular assembly in which the people were represented was the Supreme Court of the Church ; and accordingly the patriot party felt that to sacrifice this was to give up the only legal means they had of

¹ The Bishop's Walk, p. xiv.

expressing the will of the people ; which being gone, no man might open his mouth without being liable to a charge of *Leze-Majesté*. Let this be remembered, and the ecclesiastical character of our Scottish struggle will appear to the English mind less strange and repulsive ; and its formulas will be seen in their true significance and value, as the ensigns of an army, every one of which is precious, not for its inherent worth, but for what it represents.¹

We shall hear more of Leighton, as he was the Bishop of Dunblane, and Abernethy was situated within his diocese, but in the meantime it is necessary to state very briefly the outstanding features of the struggle between the Covenanters and King Charles II. In 1662 the signing of the Covenant was declared to be treasonable, and although from 1649 to 1660 ministers had not been elected by patronage but by kirk-sessions, an Act of 1662 demanded that ministers could only remain in office by receiving fresh presentation from the patron and reordination from the bishop. Nearly 300 ministers resigned their benefices rather than resign their consciences ; persecution followed, in which Turner, Dalziel, and Graham of Claverhouse were the commanders. In 1669 the Assertory Act was passed, declaring the king supreme in all cases and over all persons. In 1670 another Act was passed against all conventicles, forcing any man to reveal them on oath, and punishing every preacher at them with death and confiscation. Every baptism by a Covenanting minister was also construed into a crime. Another Act made absence from the Episcopal service for three successive Sundays criminal, and all the Acts were enforced by fines. In 1678 the Highland Host was let loose by the king in the west of Scotland ; in 1679 Archbishop Sharpe was murdered on Magus Moor ; in 1679 took place the battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge, at the latter of which the Covenanters were defeated, 400 of them killed, and 1000 taken as prisoners and confined in the walled graveyard of Greyfriars', Edinburgh.

In 1681 was passed the Test Act, which required every person

¹ The Bishop's Walk, pp. xxii, xxiii.

in public office to swear that he recognised the king as supreme over all persons, and in all cases both civil and ecclesiastical; that he would never consult about any matter of State without the king's express licence or command; and never endeavour any alteration in the government of the country. Nearly eighty of the clergy left their parishes rather than thus defy their consciences. The same Parliament passed a Royal Succession Act that asserted the divine right of kings so as to overrule all differences of creed in the heirs of the throne—an Act intended to smooth the way of the Duke of York (a professed Romanist) to succeed his brother.¹ In May 1684 "a new proscription-roll of nearly 2000 names was published," says Dr Rankin, "revealing a cruelty in the Government suggestive of absolute madness or demoniacal possession, that dealt with Christian men as if they were wild beasts to be exterminated by fire and sword."² In 1685 James II. succeeded to the throne, and in his reign the persecutions were continued. The condition of things became insufferable, and at last England and Scotland united together in inviting his son-in-law, William, Prince of Orange, to the throne. He landed at Torbay on November 5, 1688, and James II. was driven from the throne.

On Christmas 1688 the "rabbling of the curates began," and in the course of a few months about 200 of the unpopular Episcopalian clergymen were expelled by organised crowds of the peasantry. It is, however, pleasant to relate that many of these curates, with their distressed families, received help from Presbyterian courts and Presbyterian ministers for many years. "The rabblings were conducted by the Cameronians and the lowest of the people, and many of the Presbyterians strongly condemned them."³

In July 1689 Episcopacy was formally abolished by Parliament; in April 1690 Presbytery was established; the Act of 1592 was revived, and a General Assembly appointed to meet. The first

¹ Rankin's Handbook, p. 214; Dr Cunningham's History, vol. ii. p. 125.

² Handbook, p. 216.

³ Dr Cunningham's History, vol. ii. p. 153.

Assembly for forty years met on October 16, 1690. "I will not," said William, "lay myself under any obligation to be a persecutor." The Lord High Commissioner read a message from the king at the Assembly of 1690, which contained these words: "We expect that your management shall be such as we shall have no reason to repent of what we have done. We never could be of the mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion, nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party. Moderation is what religion requires, neighbouring Churches expect from, and we recommend to you." The most distinguished churchman of the time was William Carstares, Principal of Edinburgh University.

With this short account of the leading events in Scottish Church history between 1572 and 1690 in view, we will be the better able to understand the particular events in connection with the Church at Abernethy during the period. We have already seen that the first minister of the Reformed Church here was Patrick Galt; that the second was Patrick Weemys; the third was Archibald Moncrieff, who served from 1579 to 1630.¹ Of the family to which he belonged, Mr Seton says: "Besides having specially distinguished themselves in connection with the religious and ecclesiastical history of Scotland, the Moncrieffs have, in several instances, attained highly honourable positions in other important fields. Speaking generally, they have been characterised by the consistent display of Whig principles, a watchful jealousy of the Crown, and a persistent hatred of Popery."²

William Moncrieff, younger of that ilk, who died during the lifetime of his father in 1570, had by his wife Jean, daughter of Laurence, third Lord Oliphant (besides three daughters), seven sons, of whom the second according to Playfair, and the fifth according to the Culfargie Tree and Martin's MS., was Archibald

¹ The Presbytery of Perth, pp. 15, 16.

² House of Moncrieff, p. 6.

Moncreiff of Balgony, minister of Abernethy. Of him Martin says the following: "Mr Archibald Moncreif, his [William's] fifth son, was minister at Abernethy. . . . He had the lands of Balgony in that parish [Abernethy]; and his wife bore to him two sons—Mr Archibald Moncreif, who succeeded to him in the ministry at Abernethy, and Mr George Moncreif, who was minister at Arngask. Also he had a daughter, Elizabeth Moncreif, married to Robert Demperstoun, portioner of Auchtermuchtie. Both the brethren had children, but the sister was *sans* issue."¹ He was originally educated in England, and afterwards at the University of St Andrews, where he graduated March 21, 1580. In 1586 Arngask was also in his charge. He was presented to the vicarage of Abernethy before September 1, 1596, and had a gift of ij^e merks from casualties in the realm, January 11, 1598. He was throughout in sympathy with the king, who appointed him Prior and Commendator of the Priory of Elcho, January 28, 1601,² and conjointly with his second son to a yearly pension of iiij^elxxviii xiijs. iiij*d.* from the Abbey of Scone, 1st and 17th May 1606.³ In March 6, 1589, he was appointed by the Privy Council one of the commissioners for the preservation of true religion in Perth, Stormonth, and Dunkeld; he was a member of the Assemblies 1590, 1597, 1602, 1610, and 1618.⁴ He purchased the estate of Balgonie from his sister's husband, David Murray, in 1611, and along with his brothers-in-law, Sir George Auchinleck of Balmanno and David Murray, joint-commissioners from the king, he advocated the appointment of bishops as perpetual moderators in the Church courts. It was alleged that he had the ambition to aspire to a bishopric and was on the king's list, although he never attained the office:⁵ throughout the struggle between Church and Court he was on the Court side. He was nominated by the Archbishop of St Andrews as a

¹ House of Moncrieff, p. 136.

² Fasti Eccles. Scot., part iv. p. 623.

³ The Presbytery of Perth, p. 15.

⁴ R. M. S., lib. 42, No. 234.

⁵ Ibid.

member of the Assembly held in Glasgow in 1610, which overturned the Presbyterian polity of the Church, and stipulated that no minister, in the pulpit or the public exercise, should argue against or disobey the acts of this Assembly, under the pain of deprivation; and particularly that no one should discuss in the pulpit the parity or imparity of ministers.¹ He was named by the Court party as a member of the Assembly held at Perth in 1618, and supported it in the passing of the celebrated Five Articles of Perth, already referred to. The Presbytery Records bear evidence that he was frequently absent from the presbytery meetings in Perth: occasionally he is "censurit and excusit," and "exhortit to keip the presb. better in tyme cummyng."²

He was married to Margaret, daughter of Sir William Auchinleck of Balmanno, by whom he had four sons and three daughters: his eldest son, Archibald, succeeded him in the ministry at Abernethy, while his second son, George, became minister of the neighbouring parish of Arngask. He demitted his parochial charge before November 26, 1630, although he was alive on August 29, 1632, when "Mr George Moncreef [had] to add for his father."³ He died between 29th August and 23rd November 1634, aged about seventy-two.⁴

The Presbytery Records afford some interesting glimpses of the life and work of the Church during the ministry of Mr Moncrieff. On the 14th of June 1620 Alexander, Bishop of Dunkeld (moderator), at the presbytery meeting "intimatis to the brithrin that they be diligent to try if any Jesuits hes bein receivit in thair bounds. And quha ar suspect of papistrie. And quha hes not communicat, and to call tham quha ar under suspicion to subscryve the Confession of faith, and to report thair diligence this day aught dayis." When the report is given to the presbytery, we find that all in Abernethy had accepted the

¹ Records of the Presbytery of Perth.

³ Dr Cunningham's History, vol. i. p. 477.

² Ibid.

⁴ House of Moncrieff, p. 138.

Reformed religion, that no one is "suspect of papistrie and resett of Jesuits."

The moderator "requyris the brithrin to instruct their parochinaris that young children may be brot up in the trew knowledge of chrystian religion," and no doubt Mr Moncrieff would see that the bishop's requirement was obeyed.

Like his other brethren in the presbytery, Mr Moncrieff would also oppose the Sabbath desecration, evidently common among the salmon-fishers in his parish.

June 28, 1620.—Becauss the ptrie is informed that the salmond fisheris labor on the Lord's day, Qlk is scandalous. Ordaines ilk minister to taik order with thaim that ar in thair congregationes and to deill with thaim untill they be stayed.

July 26, 1620.—The ptrie ordaines forder diligence anent the fisheris unto they be stayit fish on the Lord's Day.

Mr Moncrieff would be among those who report on August 23, 1620—

The brithrin in quhais boundis the fisheris wer declairis that they have taikin sic order with thaim that they ar stayed from laboring on the Lord's Day.

The parish was troubled, however, with another kind of Sunday-breaker.

March 15, 1620.—Qlk day comperit Laurence Clerk, pyper in the parochin of Dron, and being accusit that he playis publictly on the Lord's Day in divers places, thereby withdrawis the peopile fra godly exercise, q^a being brot to the knowledge of his offence, promisis never to doe the lyk in tyme coming under the pain of X merks to the puir, and making of his publict repentance.

Boys are also sharply dealt with for the same kind of licence.

March 29, 1620.—Comperit Johnne Dron and — Dron in the parochin of Exmagird [Church of St Adrian], accusit they on the Lord's day play at the football and keits in the said kirk, and yrby bringis in ane abuse in drawing peopill from godly exercise, they promisit never to do the

lyke in tyme coming, and that they sall stay utheris so far as lyes in thaim. And if they will not stay for thaim, they sall gyffe up thair names to the session the next Sondag thaireftir that they may be punishit.

From these instances we can see that Mr Moncrieff was determined that the Sunday should be observed not as a holiday but as a day of rest and a holy day.

It is interesting to observe that during this time service was held in the churches on Christmas Day by authority. Among similar declarations about the same period each year we find (December 12, 1621) "the mod^r intimat ane uther lettre chargeing the ministeris to teach in thair kirkis the 25 day of December instant of the nativitie of Chryst."

It is refreshing to find, amid all the controversies which characterise the period, that the Church was alive to works of mercy and helpfulness. Abernethy joined with the other churches of the presbytery in its help to the following appeal:—

March 29, 1620.—Qlk day is producit ane lettre send be my L. arch-bishoppe of St Andrews makand mentione that in September last Ro^t Cowan M^r of the shipe called the William of Burntisland wes w^t sex utheris in his company alle taikin prisoneris by the turks and maid slaves according to thair custome of barbaritie, in qlk miserabill caise they continew qll they be redemed because the redemption behovit to be maid wiⁿ a ce^rtain tyme or elis thair slavrie wald have bein perpetuall. Some charitabill peopill have advanced the money upon the hope to have the samin repayit by a publict collection. And therefor maist earnestlie desyring the brethrin baith for thaimselfes and also to deal w^t thair flocks for a charitabill helpe to the said bissness. . . . The moderator most eirnestlie requyris the brithrin to be cairfull and diligent in the said collectione.

While we find the Church helpful towards distressed countrymen, we also find that it was not forgetful of the persecuted in France.

January 16, 1622.—Qlk day is producit ane lettre from my L. Arch-bishop and from the Bishop of Ross and Brechin and Clerk of Register requyring and commanding the brethrine to gather with all diligence to

the distressit Kirk of France, for obedience whereof Mr Arch^d Moncreff and George Auchinlek of Balmanno are appoyntit collectors be south Erne. Mr Ro^t Murray and John Graham of Balgonie be north Erne. Doctor Johnne Strang and the laird of Leyis be eist Tay in the kirkis of the presbytrie.

The minister did his work well, Abernethy joined in the contribution of help, and rejoiced with its fellow-Christians when, on two successive Sundays in November and December 1622, thanksgiving was appointed to Almighty God for peace to the afflicted Kirk of France.

The Church had thus a wide outlook, and deepened the spirit of brotherly love among its own people towards their brethren in another land; yet we find it not thoughtless about the poor at home, and not indiscriminate in the disbursement of its charity. The ministers were evidently perplexed about distinguishing their own needy parishioners from the idle and strong beggars that wandered over the country. A recommendation came to them from others. On March 12, 1623, Lord Viscount of Stormont, Sir Mungo Murray of Drumcarne (in Abernethy), and others appear before the presbytery, exhibit a letter desiring that such order may be taken for helping the poor in their parishes and banishing idle and strong beggars. They crave the advice and concurrence of the presbytery. After discussion the presbytery ordains that every minister convene his elders on Sunday first, take up the names of the poor—to wit, those that are old and may not work, as well as those that are young and cannot work; that they see how many are in their parishes and how they may be sustained; that they make intimation on Sunday out of the pulpit to the effect that each poor person abides in his own parish; that they report diligence to the presbytery within fifteen days. On March 26, 1623, we find the minister of Abernethy, along with his co-presbyters, reporting “that they have done diligence. And inrollit the nameis of the poor in thair particular parochinis. And will sustene thaire awin sa that they were

quyte of uthris and free of strangeris. Ordanis the brethrene to do forder diligence unto the mater come to finall perfectione."

In those days when there were no county or parish councils, it is interesting to find that a collection was taken for the building of a bridge. Some delay had been made in forwarding the one from Abernethy church, and on August 21, 1622, as the Presbytery Records state—

Comperit Mr Adam Mylnis, Mr Johne Cowdoun, ministeris of the Presbyterie of Dunfermling, and declarit that there was ane collectione to the brigg of Gairnie at the Kirk of Abernethie and Forgandeny, and is not as yet delyverit for the helping of that necessar wark. The Presbytery ordanis Mr Patrick Rynd to speak to the Laird of Balmanno, and Mr Andro Playfair to deill with Mr Wm. Row, that the saids collectiones may be delyverit for helping of the said wark.

In those days the kirk-session evidently had to discharge the duties of our present town councils or parish councils, and the alacrity with which they occasionally fulfilled their function may be judged from the above extract.

The minister of Abernethy was evidently a man of strong opinions. On June 19, 1622,—

The moderator and brethrine ordanis Mr John Wode to advertise Mr Archibald Moncrief to be present this day aucht dayis, That with his advyse the kirk of Drone may be helpit in the plantation thair of.

On June 26 we find that he had not been "advertisit to be present"; but on July 3 we find,—

Qlk day the mod^r and brethrine exponis to Mr Arch^d Moncrief That the kirk of Dron is evill provydit of ane stipend, and that it is in his hand to help it. Quha answeris that he will do nathing thairanent. . . . Mr Patrick Rynd, minister at Dron, protestis for remeid and for place to gif information to the presbyterie quhow the samin may be helpit: that they may gif thair lettre of recommendation to the lordis commissionaris for help of that kirk.

It was at this time the chapels of Pottie at the entrance to

Glenfarg and Exmagirdle in West Dron (originally belonging to the church of Abernethy) were superseded as places of worship.

Again we find that the Church of Scotland during this period gave the laity a voice in the superintendence of the parishes. On May 9, 1627, we find the brethren of the presbytery of Perth "conforme to the commission given to them, nominat certain gentillmen heritors and otheris inhabitants in ther parochs, most indifferent and conscientious men be ther estimation, for takeing tryell and notice of the esteat of each of ther paroches according to the particular articles contenit in ther commission." The four nominated by the minister of Abernethy were David Carmichael of Balmedie, John Arnot of Pitmeddin, M. Johne Pitcairne of Enderneathie, John More in Abberargie.

Archibald Moncrieff was succeeded by his son, ARCHIBALD MONCRIEFF, Jun., in 1630. He graduated at St Andrews in 1614. On July 1, 1618, the Presbytery Records say:—

Qlk day comperit Mr Arch. Moncreif, younger, . . . and desyrit earnestlie to be admittit to exercise his gift w^t the brith^rine. Qlk desire as reasonabill is grantit, and appoyntis him to exercise privatlie this day aught days.

After exercise, "the brith^rine finding gud giftis in him, ordanes him to ad publictlie in the next exercise." At a subsequent meeting he exercises, and "is allowit." He was ordained minister of Dollar by the Bishop of Dunkeld in 1619. The Records stated on June 23, 1619:—

Qlke day comperit Gavine Merchall and Johnne Pattoun, parochineris of the parochin of Dolo^r for themselves and in name of the rest of the parochiners of the said parochin, and declairit that they have heard Mr Arch. Moncreif, younger, divers times teiching in thair kirk and findis thaimselfis edified be his doctrine and eirnestlie desyris him to be ordained thair minister. And Alex^r B. of Dunkeld being pu^t promissis to proceed to his ordination.

He laboured at Dollar until 1630, when he was admitted to Aber-

nethy as conjunct minister with his father. His ordination is interesting in so far as it shows the power which the presbytery claimed in conditioning the power of the bishop. The case was a representative one, and we give it in full :—

April 28, 1630.—Whilke day producit an edict servit at Abberneathy Kirke the twentie-fyfe day of April instant derict from my lord B. of Dunblane in favours of Mr Archibald Moncreif, younger, minister at dollore presented be the patrons David vicount of Storemonth with consent of Mr Andrew Murray of Balvaird to the said kirke of Abberneathie and execut be Archibald Douglas yr. the day and dait foresaid. Whereupon the parochiners being callit conforme to the tenor of the Edict none compeired to object any thing in the said Mr Archibald's contrair. But the brethrein of the presbyterie of perth alleged against the Edict that my Lord of Storemonth and Mr Andrew Murray of balvaird wer not patrons to which my Lord Dunkeld and Mr Archibald Moncreif elder answerit that undoubtedly they wer, and that the said Mr Archibald wold take his hazert upon their presentation. Secondly the brethrein of the presbyterie objected against the forme of their proceeding In that the said Mr Archibald had no recommendation from his presbyterie and Bischope unto them according to the order to get their consent and allowence thereto. To the which my Lord Dunkeld replied that they wold not seeke their consent nor allowance.¹

Again we hear the presbytery protesting against the bishop :—

May 26, 1630.—Whilke day the brethrein haveing intelligence that my Lord Dunkeld had admittit Mr Archibald Moncreeff, younger, to the Kirke of Abberneathie within their bounds without their acknowledgement and allowance, as also the said Mr Archibald as yet remaining minister at Dollor Kirke. Wherefore the brethrein all in ane voice disallows the forme of such proceeding and ordenis the same not to be acknowledged be them and to seeke redresse theirow in tyme and place.

The very fact of Mr Moncrieff still retaining the church of Dollar with his new parish seems to indicate that he had doubt of the validity of his induction in his own mind.

June 23, 1630.—Whilke day Mr Archibald Moncreeff, younger, being present was askit be the moderator if he were admitted minister at Abberneathie Kirke not having demitted the Kirke of dolor. Answerit he was

¹ Presbytery Records.

but it come not of himself but was wiget theirto be his father *ex Improviso*. Notwithstanding he was willing according to his possibilitie to give contentment to the brethrein and submitt himself to them for any offence he has done. The moderator and brethrein declarit their Dissent to his admission and forme of proceeding and that they, that they, wold complein to the Judge ordinarie for remeid.

The repetition "that they" evidently indicated strong feeling over their rights!

The case was referred to the Assembly, and on October 30, 1630, we find the following in the Presbytery Records:—

As also anent Mr Archibald Moncreef younger the said assemblie has declarit that they thinke the presbyterie of Perth has bien hardly used in not seeking their consent to his alledged admission to the kirke of Abberneathie within their diocie theirfore the Assemblie had desyred the brethrein of the presbyterie to see to it that all things be orderly proceedit before his acceptation.

We have no means of now learning how the matter was settled, but on October 28, 1635, Mr Archibald Moncrieff, junior, was certainly minister of Abernethy, and was appointed to ordain his brother George to the neighbouring parish of Arngask:—

Whilke day is producit a letter from my Lord Archbishop off St Andrews showing the admission of Mr George Moncreeff to the ministrie off Arnegoske, whereupon the brethren ordenis his brother Mr Archibald Moncreeff to give him institution at the paroch kirke and enter him to his ministrie.

Mr Moncrieff was minister of the parish from 1630 to 1671, and the Presbytery Records contain references to him and the parish which are interesting as reflecting light upon the Church life of the period.

The Church was not tolerant: toleration is a lesson that has been learned with difficulty and retained with greater difficulty.

April 13, 1631.—Whilke Day it is ordenit that the brethrein of the presbyterie shall deal with my Lord St Andrews at the assemblie for transportation of Sir John Ogilvie of Craig, excommunicat papist from the

burgh of Perth, because of the offence that is given by his remaning ther and prejudice to that people and kirke.

Item it is ordenit that the ministers of Perth and the rest of the brethrein of the presbyterie make intimation that none of their people give communication nor converse with the said Sir John Ogilvie excommunicat papist as they shall incur the censures of the Kirke.

Abernethy, along with the other parishes in the presbytery, had this intimation made from its pulpit in 1631.

One turns with a sense of relief from such intolerant strictures to a finer phase of the religious life—one that expresses sympathy with the sufferings of others.

February 16, 1631.—Whilke day productit be my Lord Dunkeld an copie of an act of his majestie's counsell for collecting charitable support of the benevolence of all well-affected brethrein and Christians to the distressed banished brethrein of the over palatinate who are for the present in Norenberge and territorie about. With a copie of their pitifull and lamentable petition showing their calamitie and distresse as the same at more lengt bears. Wherefore the brethrein ordenis the same to be intimat in their parochs respectie the more to stirr up and move their people's compassion and to report their diligence agane the terme contenit in the act.

On the 15th day of February 1632 we find that the collections are forwarded to Perth, and that the response which the Abernethy people made to the appeal places them third on the presbytery list. Their contribution was 90 lbs, 18s.

We now come to stormy 1636. Charles I., under the leadership of Archbishop Laud, attempted to force his Service-Book and Canons on the Church of Scotland without the consent of the Assembly or Parliament. The proposal was made in 1636, and was to have been ripe for Easter 1637, but the books were not printed at the time anticipated. A font was appointed to be placed at the entrance of the church; the cross was enjoined in baptism; "the water to be changed and consecrated in the font twice a-month; an altar was appointed for the chancel; the Communion-table decorated was placed in the east; the elements were

to be consecrated by a prayer expressive of the real presence; the host was to be elevated as an oblation; the confessions of the penitent were to be concealed by the presbyter."¹

The presbytery of Perth join in the protest, and the minister of Abernethy takes an important part in it.

August 23, 1637.—It is appointed that the brethrein shall give in a supplication unto the Lords of the Secret Counsell the nixt counsell day against the Service book, and Mr John Robertson and Mr John murray to be penners of the supplication.

On October 25, 1637, "the generall supplication against the bookes of Service and Canones is read and subscribed" by (among others) Archibald Moncreeff.

On November 1, 1637—

Ther ar given unto Mr John robertson the supplicationes against the bookes of Canones and Service subscribed particularly be the parishioners of Perth, Colace, St Martin's, Kilspindie, Drone, Regorton, and tippermuire to be exhibit the nixt counsell-day before the Lords of Secret Counsell and (among others) Archibald Moncreef² promised to exhibit the supplicationes of their awin parishes.

November 15, there is no meeting of presbytery, "the brethren being in Edr."

November 29, 1637, we find "that the commission geven to Mr Robert murray for attending the king's answer unto the supplicationes against the bookes of Canones and Service" is subscribed by (among others) Archibald Moncreif.

January 3, 1638, a public fast is appointed throughout all the kirks of the presbytery, "to give a good successe unto the present questiones of the change of divine service and discipline of the kirke."

The rejection of the new Service-Book and Canons led to

¹ Dr Rankin's Handbook of the Church of Scotland, p. 188.

² Proper names and place-names are printed throughout according to the spelling of the Records.

another step in 1638—the National Covenant. The signing of it began in Greyfriars, Edinburgh, on February 28, 1638, and the enthusiasm for taking part in it passed over the country. Edinburgh was the place where the protest was first made, and the ministers of the Perth presbytery evidently took part in it. There was no meeting of presbytery February 14 to March 14, 1638—“No meeting for thrie weekes because the brethren were in Ed^l. for the maist pairt.” They brought enthusiasm and earnestness back with them, for on March 14, 1638—

It is appointed y^t the covenant with God sal be read the nixt Sunday in all the kirkes of the presbyterie and sal be subscribed be all the parishoners wha can write; and the Sunday thereafter it sal be solemnly renewed be all the people with solemne fast; and the next wednesday immediately heir after it sal be renewed be the ministerie in the kirk of perth with uplifted handes and subscribed and Mr Robert murray to have doctrine conforme.

What a Sunday that of March 1638 must have been, when the National Covenant was read from the pulpit! What discussions there must have been around the quiet firesides of the people throughout the week! What a crowded church Mr Moncrieff is sure to have had on the following Sunday, when the parishioners were to subscribe the Covenant! One would give much for a picture of the people, with countenance lit up and reflecting minds strong in the conviction that they were engaged in a great battle with strong powers. One would give much to hear their words as they conversed in the field where they toiled, and around the hearth when the day's toil was over. Those were days of earnestness.

At Perth, March 21, 1638, we find, “The Covenant with God is renewed by uplifting of handes immediately after sermone publickly in the kirk, and subscribed on parchment” by ministers, expectants, and schoolmasters present—Mr Archibald Moncrieff among others.

On March 28 Mr Alexander Petrie (minister of Rhynd) reports

that the fast had been kept, and the Covenant had been subscribed at Abernethy : all seem to have done so, as the Presbytery Records give no list of any who had declined in this parish. So earnest was the presbytery on the point that we find evidence of "ane act maid that no minister nor expectant suld be admitted till exercise or add or to teach in any off the ministers pulpits w^{thin} the presbitrie that hes not subscrized the Covenant."

On November 21, 1638, the famous Glasgow Assembly met, when what is known in Scotland as the Second Reformation was accomplished. The Five Articles of Perth, the Service-Book, and Canons were abjured and condemned ; all the bishops were deposed, and eight of them excommunicated for special offences. We find that on September 26, 1638, "Mr David Carmichaell off Balmedie" was appointed commissioner to this Assembly from the parish from Abernethy ; and on December 25 (a few days after the rising of the Assembly) he gives in his report of the "acts and proceedings." On January 2, 1639, we find him again present at the presbytery with his commission, received and sworn.

The Records give us little glimpses into the life of the period. The king raised an army to crush the rebellion, and the Covenanters were summoned to arms in self-defence. Lord Rothes and Leslie, afterwards Earl of Leven, prepared a Covenanting army : at the end of May 1639 this army, accompanied by Baillie of Kilwinning as chaplain, took up its position on Dunse Law, while the king and his army were just across the Tweed. Negotiations were, however, begun, which ended in a treaty on the basis of a free Assembly at Edinburgh and a Parliament to follow.

May 22, 1639.—The ordinar exercise was intermitted untill the 26 of June because both pastors and people were gone out in armes to the border to stand in defence of ther contry, Religion and Liberties.

July 10, 1639.—The whole brethren and elders [Carmichael of Balmedie among them] weir sworne that they nether alreadie war nor should be heirefter corrupted to doe anything against the covenant or the lawfull acts and liberties of the Kirk. It was appointed that the

whole ministers of the presbyterie should intimate the excommunication of the pretenditt Bishop of Moray the Sunday following.

July 23, 1639.—According to the Acts of the generall assemblie prescribing that the charges of the commissionerars to the assemblie should be paid by the severall parishes. Halfe a crown a day was appointed for every commissioner.

During all the troubles of the period the Church did not neglect the cultivation of family piety. There are frequent references in the Records to the exhortations from the Moderator that the ministers should use their diligence in seeing that the "family exercise" was observed.

The peace between the Covenanters and the king was of short duration. "Such was the spirit of the times," says Dr Cunningham, "that the rich brought their plate and had it melted down for the support of the army, receiving bonds for its repayment subscribed by the nobles."¹ The Earl of Argyll and General Munro carried war into the North, wasting the lands of all who were enemies to the Covenant. By the beginning of August 1640 a large army headed by Leslie was marching from Edinburgh towards the South. It halted for two or three weeks at Dunse Law and then crossed the Tweed, the Earl of Montrose being the first to plunge into the stream. On the 30th August the Scots entered Newcastle, and Charles, beset with difficulties from England and an invading army from the North, requested the Covenanters to appoint commissioners to meet with fifteen of his English nobility to adjust differences. Episcopacy was as a result overthrown in Scotland, and a grant of £220,000 was promised to the Scots in name of brotherly assistance.

We find this phase again reflected in the ecclesiastical records of the district :—

June 10, 1640.—The Moderator propounds concerning the number of the ministers that should be sent with the regiment and ther stipends and

¹ History, vol. ii. p. 31.

who should be the men. For the I. they agreed 2 should be the number ; for the 2d it was concluded every on of the 2 should have in allowance half a crown in the day, and so taking 40 dayes pay w^t them every on should have 60 pounds in hand, the manner of collecting this they agreed that every minister within the division should pay presently 4^{lb} 1^s. And if any have any grievances (as all may not pay alyke) these who complained should be relieved and others mor able pay the burden / for the 3 point they made a litt of 4 to witt Mr Will. Row, Mr Jo. Duncan, Mr Archibald Moncrieff, Mr Jo. Cruickshank. This Litt they thought fitt should be presented to the Erle of Montrose, Crouner of the Regiment, that he might nominatt any two of them he pleased. Or If that my L: should nominatt any other within the presbytrie or elswher they should give him the forsaid stipend. Mr Jo. Robertson and Mr Da. Weims appointed to present the litt to the crouner.

Mr Moncrieff was thus one of a leet of four presented to the Earl of Montrose for attendance on the army: the earl, however, selected Mr William Row, and remitted to the Presbytery to appoint any other whom they pleased. Mr Moncrieff was thus permitted to remain in his parish, but still he had something assigned to him in connection with the affair.

October 21. — Compeared Mr Wm. Row's wife, complaining to the presbytrie that hir husband was so long detained from his familie and desyring 1^o that he should be supplied by moneys, 2^o that another be sent to relieve him. The presbytrie appoint Mr Alex^r Petrie to adverteise Mr Archib. Moncreef to try if Mr Thom. Moray or any other besyde what is the course taken in the presbytries of Fyfe about the camp ministers. After his report they promised to give an answer.

This year the ruling elder from Abernethy was Mr William Moray of Drumkerne (Drumcairn).

However busy the Church was with wider and more national interests, it did not neglect its disciplinary duties at home. How stern that discipline was may be seen from the following instances. September 23, a parishioner who had "abused his minister," and in his "druken humour had struken him," appeared before the presbytery and declared his repentance on his knees. He swore

solemnly that neither directly nor indirectly would he hereafter wrong Mr Archibald Moncrieff nor his. He is appointed to come in with sackcloth barefooted. Mr Moncrieff, however, suffered him to appear in his own habit, but he is required to write his oath over his confession in his own hand "for mer securities cause."

Another parishioner in Abernethy, convicted of breaking the Sabbath day, was ordained to make confession of his fault before the pulpit of Rhynd, and pay half a merk.

A third parishioner, being disobedient to session, is cited before the presbytery but does not appear. Firm measures are taken. "Mr Archibald Moncreife is appointed to desyre Balmedie as Bailzie to bring him in to the presb. this day 8 dayes." He is appointed by the presbytery "to goe to the stoole of repentance and confess his fault the nixt Sabbath, and his penaltie to be as the session shall appoint."

In February 1642 we find Mr David Carmichael, Laird of Balmeddie, along with other three ruling elders, appointed by the presbytery to confer with the town council of Perth anent the differences between them and one of the Perth ministers about a glebe: "The presbytrie regrat the differences betwixt them and thair minister." The presbytery representatives report at a subsequent meeting—

The said Counsell gave this anser that they thought it noe wayis neidful that any meeting sould be of that kind but if Mr Jo^{ne} Robertsone or any uther in his name head any thing to say to them to come and propone it to the Counsell and they sould have ane answer: with all it was answered that unles Mr Jo^{ne} Ro^tsone did desist from that pursuit he would not geat ther hearts. This report being mead the Brethren deferis any further concerning that purpose till the nixt day yr be a mor frequent meeting.

In the same month we find a collection appointed for the poor fugitives out of Ireland.

In March 9, 1642, we find "Mr Arch^d Moncreiff was inquired the reason of his absence thrie dayis bypast. He declared he head bein in Edⁿ. The Brethren regrat his people's want of preaching in his absence and intreated to be more carfull in time comning."

From the next reference to the parish in the Presbytery Records we find that the schoolmaster also discharged the duty of reader:—

August 17, 1642.—Mr Archibald Rosse, schoolmaster at Abernethie compears and offers to demitte his office of School-master there, so y^t he continowe Reader and be provided with a competent maintenance for this office. It is appointed y^t Mr Arch^d Moncrief deal with the parishioners for this effect, in respect the man is a borne man there and of age and hes many children.

In the same month the presbytery make a roll of the patronages of the kirks within their bounds, and we find that the kirk of Abernethie belongeth unto the king, "as being a kirk of the Abbacie of Arbroth."

On October 26 we find that "the Brethren are appointed to discharge the setting out of fires upon halloweven and make acts in there session for that effect." What may have occasioned it we know not, but the same day—

Mr Archbald Moncreif desyres that some of the Ministrie and ruling elders might meet at his kirk upon wednsday fyftene day for settling the affairs therof. The Presb. appoint Mr John Robertson, David Wemys, Alex^r Petrie, Ministers. The Laird of Layes and Bachiltoun, ruling Elders for that effect.

We now get a glimpse of the romance life of Abernethy in the middle of the seventeenth century. It is not the modesty of blushing brides we hear of, but of their noise and angry contention at the kirk door during service. It was the custom in those days for marriage to be celebrated publicly in the kirk at the close of the service, and on one occasion the good minister

of Abernethy was so sorely perplexed that he asked the advice of his brethren regarding it:—

August 9, 1643.—Mr Archibald Moncreif craves advys of the presb. anent notorious uproar of certane weomen who coming to his kirk for marreag in the midst of prayer, stryving for place to be first at the dore fell into ane miserable and schamfull contentione. The presb. advys him to call them befor his owin sessione and inflict such censure upon them as the sessione sall think convenient for removing of scandall. And ordaines him to report his diligence heirin.

On September 6, 1643, the minister reports "that these women of whois miscarriag he had compleaned had compeired befor their owin sessione and made satisfactiōne."

The non-attendance of a parishioner at church also gave Mr Moncrieff much heart-burning:—

August 9, 1643.—Mr Archibald complanes against Mr Ro^t. Aitone ane gentillman in his parochin who nevertheless he hath often beine requested and seriously delt with yet obstinatly withdrawes himself fra his owin paroch kirk and refuses to communicat thair. The presb. ordaines that he be summond to compeir before them nixt day.

At a subsequent meeting the minister reports "that Mr Ro^t Aitone had compeired befor thair owin Sessione and given them contentment. Declairing upon his great oath that it was nather neglect nor contempt bot his frequent affaires q^rwith he was intrusted qlks diverts him and promises obedience in tyme coming. Q^rupon the presb. acquiesced."

Again we hear the sound of war. At the presbytery meeting held on September 13, 1643, a letter is read from the Convention of Estates, and subscribed by the Lord Chancellor, requiring two things of every brother of the presbytery—(a) To send forty men fully armed to Leith, and (b) able and qualified ministers with them. On January 31, 1644, it is reported that Abernethy has sent forward its men for the army. As a contribution to the general funds we find that it gave 31 lib. 17s. 10d.

On October 25, 1643—

Ane letter productit, publictly read, sent from the Commissioners of the generall assembly for the receaving of the late Covenant. Ane copy q^of wais delyverit to every brother. And ordained all to be present on fryday the 27 of October for advysing and condiscending upon ane common course of reiding and explaneing of the said Covenant in thair severall parochie kirks eftir ane uniforme maner.

Mr Moncrieff purchased two copies of the Acts of the last Assembly held at Edinburgh, and evidently used his diligence in informing his parishioners of the action taken by the Kirk.

The presbytery approved of the "conversation" of the reader at Abernethy; but the minister's brother at Arngask is "exhorted to diligence in his studies, for his further inabling of him for his calling"; "because of some mistakes and weakness to be earnest w^t God in prayer and to be diligent at his booke for enabling of him in his ministrie."

On October 27, 1643, the minister of Abernethy joined with his brethren of the presbytery in swearing to the Solemn League and Covenant.

The whole brethren w^t uplifted hands to God did solemnelie swear to the severall articles thairin conteinit and sub^t to the same w^t thair hands, and ordained the said Covenant to be intimate and explained in thair severall paroches the ensuing Sabbath the 29 of October instant. And to be subscrivit by all y^r parochiners eftir solemne humiliation and fasting the Sabbath immediately y^reftir November 5, 1643, as they will be answerable.

The decree of the presbytery is observed, and on November 8, 1643—

The brethren who were present declare that they have red and explained the Covenant and observed the fast conforme to the ordinance. And *so far as daylight could serve* had taken the subscription of the people. Ordanis them to proceed in obtaining of the subscriptions. And the next day to bring in yr Covenants subscrivit that they may be examined.

Presbytery had at this time no toleration, and demanded to be sole and supreme. It had conquered in the struggle, and, after the manner of conquerors, would permit no rival. It insisted that every man in Scotland should both be a Covenanter and a Presbyterian.

On November 29, 1643, a letter from the commissioners of the General Assembly is read at the presbytery meeting requiring an inspection to be made into the list of subscribers from each parish, by comparing this with the communion roll: "ordaines every particular Covenant w^t the Communion rolles to be brought in the nixt day and compared thairwith conforme to the advertisement foirsaid."

They are very particular in their work. We find that the minister of Abernethy is appointed to compare the communion roll of Rhynd with its list of subscribers to the Solemn League and Covenant, while the minister of Errol is asked to discharge a similar duty for Abernethy. There seem to have been no Non-conformists at Abernethy, for on December 13, 1643, we find that it is among the parishes "approven."

The Church had not only Presbytery established in Scotland, but it was filled with the vision of extending it to England. As the bishops had claimed divine right for Episcopacy, so the Scottish ministers asserted in their turn the same privilege for Presbytery. They both believed this, and became active propagandists in disseminating it among others; they had the ambition of making Episcopal England become Presbyterian England. The Scottish Presbyterians united with the English Puritans, and the object that the former had in the coalition was a uniformity of Church government in both countries after a Presbyterian model. This was the idea underlying the Solemn League and Covenant.

There was a deep religious earnestness in Scotland during the period, but it was an earnestness modelled more after the letter of Old Testament examples than the spirit of the New Testament. It became narrow and bitter, and had not the spirit of love or toleration pervading it. To be a Christian was regarded as synonymous

with being a Covenanter and Presbyterian; and the martial spirit became companion of the religious spirit. An army was sent across the Border to assist in overturning Episcopacy and establishing Presbytery; and war was carried on under banners inscribed with Christ's Crown and Covenant. The carnal weapon, and not the spiritual weapon, became dominant, and the lovely aspects of religion were obscured when the Church had to support a standing army and advance fanatical measures.

The Records reflect the times. We find (December 27, 1643) that a letter is publicly read requiring the diligence of the brethren for the regiment, and they all promised to give it according to their power. On February 28, 1644, we learn that the army is in England, and that the ministers are exhorted to get from their people due maintenance for the same. On March 27, 1644, they are asked to make known to their people the order that all between sixty and sixteen are to march northward to Aberdeen. On May 8, 1644, the Earl of Montrose is publicly excommunicated; of July 24, 1644, there is thanksgiving appointed for the victory of Marston Moor; on November 6, likewise for the taking of New-castle; and on September 17, 1645, for the victory of Philiphaugh. The atmosphere of the time breathed a military spirit, and everything speaks of the efforts of earnest men, who believed their religious liberty to be imperilled, and who fought bravely, even unto death, that they might uphold it.

Those must have been eager days in our parish, and we can recall the deep interest with which the affairs of Church and State would be discussed by the people, the careful watching of them, and the devotion to their Kirk. It is noteworthy that the minister, however, was frequently absent from the Presbytery meetings; but his loyalty was not questioned by his brethren when he stated that his long absence was caused by the "affaires concerning his estait qlk was lykly to perish."

The session, however, while interested in the affairs of the

nation, do not neglect what they feel to be their duty at home. They are perplexed over a case of Sunday-breaking and report to the presbytery.

March 19, 1645.—Complaint Mr James Campbell against the boatman Joⁿ Scarp at Methven's coble within the parochin of Abernethy as ane profane breaker of the Sabaoth. Ordaines Mr Arch. Moncreif to be advertised that order may be taken heiranent.

April 2, 1645.—Mr Arch. Moncreif being personally present. It was declaired unto him the frequent breaking of the Sabaoth by Joⁿ Scarp, boatman at Methvens. And was questioned if he had maid satisfacione for his former faultes. Mr Arch. declaired that he had satisfyed befor the kirk bot that yet he had not payed his penalty as was enjoined. Ordaines Mr Arch. to exact his penalty for his former fault. And thairefter immediately to call him befor the kirk-sessione and to punish and fyne him exemplarly for this his continuing on the breaking of the Sabaoth. And Mr Arch. appoynded to Report his diligence heirin to the presb. as he wilbe answerable.

May 21, 1645.—Mr Arch. Moncreif Reports anent the boatman at Methven's coble that he is present in process with him befor his kirk-sessione. Bot desyres that he may be summond to compeir befor the presb. nixt day. Qlk was accordingly performed.

On June 11, 1645, we hear the sentence :—

Compeired Joⁿ Sharp boatman at Methven's coble within the parochin of Abernethy, and confessed his breaking of the Sabaoth transporting of Drúmkells, Meginch and his servants, alleading that he was forced thairto by threatnings. It was found that he had divers tymes befor being guilty of the lyk prophanatione and had satisfyed befor the kirk thairfor bot had not payed his penalty. Ordanes him to pay 10 lbs for his former fault. Also for this fault to satisfy befor the congregacione Sondag come 15 dayes. As also did enact himself upon the Lyk fault in tyme coming committed by him to pay the sowme of 20 lbs *toties quoties* besyds ecclesiasticall censurs. Lykwayes (for the advoyding of the Lyk evill ocasioness efterward) ordanes him to bring up the oares of his boat to the Laird of Innerneathy, his hous or to the ministers hous every Saturdayes night. And not to do any service at his boat upon the sabaoth bot at thair speciall derictione and allowance under the paine of the forsaid penalty *toties quoties*. To the qlk ordinance he promised obedience in all poynts. And did inact himself judicially to the forsaid effect as said is.

The judgment of the presbytery, however, did not find approval with the boatman, and he does not lose heart to declare it publicly in the kirk :—

June 25, 1645.—Mr Arch^d Moncreif Reports anent the boatman at Methven's, that the last Sabaoth he called him publictly to compeir befor the pulpit according to the ordinance of the presb. and Requiring him to humble himself for his frequent prophaning of the Sabaoth. Bot in the face of the congregation he refused and behaved himself prophanely and scandalously. Saying that he was no breaker of the Sabaoth more than himself and other. To the great contempt and scandall of his and the whole ministrie.

In those days the Kirk ruled with an iron hand :—

July 9, 1645.—Joⁿ Sharp Boatman Methven's Coble called and compeiring and confessed and acknowledged his disobedience to the ordinance of the kirk for satisfacione of his prophanatione of the Lord's day also acknowledged his scandalous behaviour to his minister in the face of the congregatiene. Ordaines him to be committed to prisone till cautione be found under paine of ane 100 lbs for satisfying of the discipline of the kirk and former ordinance maid y^anent in all poynts.

The presbytery also required a cautioner :—

Compeired also Henry Sharp burgess of Perth and inacted himself surety and cautioner for the said Joⁿ Sharp his satisfying of the discipline of the Kirk under pane of the foresaid sowme of ane 100 lbs. Lykas the said Joⁿ Sharp inacted himself to releif and skaithles keep the said cautioner of the payment of the said sowme in cais of disobedience upon his part. Qlk was accepted. Lykas ordaines the former ordinance dait at Drone 11 June last by past to stand in vigor against the said Joⁿ Sharp for restraining of the Lyk prophaning of the Lord's Day in tyme to come—And Report of his satisfacione to be maid by his minister.

On March 8, 1648, we find that he is again before the session on the same charge, but pleading "that he is forced by gentillmen passengers against his will." On March 22 the presbytery ordained "if he sall be found faulty in the Lyk, y^t the former acts against him be put in executione."

One cannot read the above and not feel how rigorous and stern was the Church discipline of the period: there was no "sweet reasonableness" in it; there was little of the love that wins. It is to be questioned if such discipline for trivial charges did not defeat its own end, and only succeeded in making the person dealt with more obdurate than before. In carrying out the provision made in God's house for "reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"; in endeavouring to produce "the godly sorrow which worketh repentance, not to be repented of," it is to be regretted that they were more guided by the ideal of law than the nobler, larger ideal of love. It is to be regretted that the spirit of the New Testament was so conspicuously absent, and that the Church life was so much shaped after several of the earlier Old Testament examples.¹ The discipline of the period recalls the days of the Inquisition, and gives ground for belief in the saying that "presbyter was but priest writ large."

¹ It is impossible to measure the far-reaching and beneficial influence which Old Testament study has exercised over the Scottish mind. It has thus been described by Professor G. A. Smith: "For more than two centuries the liberties, the patriotism, the proudest memories of the Scottish people, have been associated with the institutions and the heroism of Old Testament history. It was not only that the prevailing theology in Scotland conceived of God's relationship to man under the form of a covenant; but, as in Israel's case, the covenant was a national one, and comprised every public interest. The Scottish preachers who, in times of persecution, taught their suffering nation to see herself in the Trampled Vine, the Desolate City, and the Remnant of God's pity and promise; in times of peace and construction enforced upon every department of her life the whole righteousness of ancient Israel. Nor was it that legalism they preached which, being falsely imputed to Scotland, has moved some to call her in scorn 'the Judæa of the West.' The preachers of the Covenant have ever kept before the people far more the person of their King than the letter of His Law; it was not legal obedience they demanded, but those chivalrous affections which are as the fire to cleanse national life and to kindle a people to sacrifice and service—zeal for the honour of God, loyalty to Christ the King, and the conviction that He is so identified with the poor and oppressed of the people that no efforts can be too costly for their sakes. And even when Scottish preaching has turned more specially to ethics, it has not been the Law which it has used, so much as the more widely applicable morality of the Book of Wisdom. Indeed, we cannot overestimate the effect which, at least till a recent date, the regular exposition of the Book of Proverbs, in church and school and home, has exercised upon the Scottish character."—*The Preaching of the Old Testament to the Age*, pp. 28-30.

On September 24, 1645, the Presbytery Records state: "The Practice of the Directory to be begun this ensembling Sabaoth. And to Report." It was at this time the Book of Common Order was superseded: no prayers are prescribed in the Directory, but what ought to be the burden of prayer is stated. It seems to be implied that the Westminster Directory was to supersede the Geneva Liturgy, and among other regulations it enacted that baptism was to be administered without any ceremony save the sprinkling with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Lord's Supper was to be celebrated frequently.

The communicants were to take their place at the table: the word of institution was to be read; the bread and wine were to be blessed, and severally distributed, the minister himself partaking while he dispensed to the people. Marriage was to be celebrated, after the proclamation of banns, publicly in the churches, but not on the Sabbath day. The dead were to be buried without any ceremonies; there were to be no prayers, no chanting of hymns; but the minister might seize upon the occasion to put the living in mind of their latter end.¹

From 1645 until to-day the Directory has theoretically remained the guide for worship in the Scottish Church, but in practice it is disregarded, and has given way to the large, tolerant spirit that characterises the Church of to-day. In September 1645, in accordance with the directions of the commissioners, the Book of Common Prayer was disused in Abernethy parish church; previous to that time, and even prior to Knox's Liturgy, and the Missale Romanum, the Celtic Church used a liturgy of its own. 1645 formed a strange departure after the usage of at least eight hundred years, as far as this ancient church was concerned.

The Records contain other references which, read in connection with the general history of the period, are not without their interest, and we record them. In March 1646 we find the minister reporting, in answer to the questions of the presbytery, that there are no

¹ Dr Cunningham's History, vol. ii. p. 52.

"malignants" in Abernethy; only "Jo" peit, elder, who has divers tymes beene with the rebels. Also my Lord of Lyndores who receaved certaine of the rebels into his house and intertained them." They are cited to appear before the presbytery with all diligence.

On May 15, 1646, a letter is read complaining of the brethren who do not resort to the regiments, commending to the charity of the congregations the distressed ministers of Argyle, and asking from each congregation a list of the widows and orphans of those whose lives had been lost in the public service. While the Church was earnest it did not forget to be pitiful. On August 26, 1646, we find that the presbytery meets at Abernethy on account of the "fearfull infection of the burgh of Perth and uthoris paroches adjacent."¹

April 7, 1747.—Mr Moncrieff reports that he is pressing family exercise upon his congregation, "bot finds bot small success." The presbytery was diligent in impressing family piety upon its people: on March 22, 1648, we find that the brethren again report their diligence upon this important matter, and complain that the success was small and not such as they desired: "They are ordained still to press the samyne upon them. And withall according to the act to visite the particular families, and speciall notice to be taken of the families of Elders."

We find that the discipline of the Church is carefully guarded, and no exceptions made. Mr Moncrieff, after much trouble in the matter, required Lord Lindores² to appear, and announced to the presbytery (December 29, 1647) that "my Lord Lyndores had given publictly befor the congregatiōe his oath of verity."

¹ See p. 308.

² That is, second Lord Lindores. The Abbey of Lindores was founded about 1178 by David, Earl of Huntingdon, brother of King William the Lion. It was erected into a temporal lordship by King James VI., 25th December 1600, in favour of Sir Patrick Lesley of Pitcairly, son of Andrew, fifth Earl of Rothes, who held the abbacy *in commendam* since 1581.

Intimation is made in the church of the change of the "merkat dayes in the brugh of Perth q^rby the Lord's day be not prophaned" (May 9, 1647).

The country was much troubled by the spread of the infection, and we find the presbytery coming to a wise resolution, which was to be intimated to the congregations.

May 26, 1647.—The Brethren taking to y^r serious consideration the great danger y^t may ensew by the spreading infectione of the plague of pestilence into divers parishes of the kingdome, As also by the removing of wicked and scandalous persones from one congregation to ane another ffor preventing and Remedying of the evills forsaid, Ordaines y^t no persone nor persones be received into any congregacione within the bounds of the presb. without testimonialls. Especially y^t they be not receaved to reseed as constant parishioners by tennants nor receaved into cottaries. And y^t y^r testimonialls beare from the Last place of y^r residence that they ar free of any suppositione of infectione nor Lying under any publict slander. And appoynts this present Ordinance to be intimat in y^r severall congregaciones within the bounds. And ane Act to be passed y^rupon for observance in y^r severall sessiones.

Another excellent work that the presbyteries did for the Church was the prevention of burial within the buildings set apart for worship. We find an example of this in Abernethy. The Laird of Innernethy was brought under Church censure for using the church as a place of sepulture, "although his ancestors had been in possession of place of burial there for the space of 400 years." The Records state:—

November 3, 1647.—Anent the Laird of Innernethy Elder his causing bury his wyf into the church. Mr Arch. Moncreif Reports that Innernethy had maid publict declaratione befor the congregation confessing the unlawfulness y^rof and disclaiming any right to burry y^r in tyme coming nevertheles of 400 yeires possessione going befor. And as for his wrettin declaratione Mr Arch. confesseth y^t he had forgotten to aske it. He is ordained to bring it with him next day.

January 11, 1649.—The presbytery "appoints ye brethren to bring in a list of ye families within y^r congregaciones q^rin some

of y^m can read y^t y^r may be gottine as many Directiones for family worship as ye number doth extend to."

On March 28, 1649, the report is given:—

List of ye families q^rin some of y^m can read within ye paroches following: viz., Scone 25; Drone 36; Dunbarny 55; St Madoes 9; Rind 25; Kinnoull 28; St Martines 13; Rogortone 9; Arngosk 16; Abernethie 100.

It is creditable that Abernethy had the greatest number of families whose education implied a capability to read, and probably the conspicuous difference is to be explained by the fact that a school had existed here from very early times, and had created a public opinion on the subject. It is also to be noted that the two parishes which come next (Dron and Dunbarny) are the immediately adjacent ones, in which the influence of the ancient Celtic school was most likely felt.

November 4, 1647, we find a complaint from a parishioner: "Supplicatione Mr Jas. Hamiltone of Potie being presented, qlk supplicatione was referred by the Kirk Sessione of debarny to the presb. concerning ane convenient unto the said Mr James becaus of his thickness of heiring." Until his trouble be remedied the laird is "appoyned to keip his parish church."

Much trouble was felt both in the presbytery and Abernethy over the "Engagement" of 1647, and it will be necessary to recall it. In the summer and autumn of 1647 a revolution had taken place in England which placed the power over both King and Parliament in the hands of the army. Military despotism was the result of the Civil War, but still the Scottish Estates toward the end of the year despatched the Earls of Lanark and Loudon to make an effort and save the king. The captive monarch promised to give to the Solemn League and Covenant a parliamentary sanction, at the same time providing that no one should take it against his will. He agreed to establish Presbytery for three years in England, provided that he and his were allowed

their own mode of worship, and at the expiry of that time to establish such a polity as twenty commissioners of his own with the Westminster Divines should determine as most agreeable to God's Word. These conditions were embodied in a treaty with the Scots Estates, known as the Engagement.¹

The commissioners of the General Assembly remonstrated, and declared themselves as dissatisfied with the king's concessions. They held that the king must take the Covenant himself, and compel all others to do likewise; that he must become a Presbyterian himself and establish it permanently in England. Parliament and the Assembly Commission were thus brought into collision; an army was raised by the former with the Duke of Hamilton at its head.

When the Assembly met in July 1648, approval was given to the proceedings of the Commission, and defiance made to Parliament. The Assembly complained that the "Engagement" had been made without its consent; declared the oath imposed to be unlawful, and forbade the people taking it; threatened ministers who should not speak out against the acts of the legislature; maintained that to unite with "malignants against sectaries" was evil in the extreme. Well does Dr Cunningham say, "The pretensions of Hildebrand, which led to the war of investitures, were not so high as those of this conclave of presbyters in the Scottish Vatican."²

The ill-disciplined, ill-equipped army of the Engagers, after dispersing the peasantry at Mauchline, marched into England, and was defeated at Preston by Cromwell's army. Hamilton was taken prisoner and beheaded.

After this defeat, Argyll, Cassillis, and Eglinton assembled their vassals; the westland ministers and nobles combined with them; crowds of Covenanters marched towards the capital; the Committee of Estates fled, and Argyll was placed at the head of

¹ Dr Cunningham's History, vol. ii. p. 62.

² Ibid., p. 63.

affairs. This was known as the "Whiggamore's Raid." The party in power made peace with Cromwell, placed Berwick and Carlisle in his hands, brought him to Edinburgh, and although in the light of the Covenant he was a "sectary," they did everything to do him honour. On the other hand, they passed extreme measures against all who refused to take the Covenant, and deposed many ministers. Kirkton says: "Now the ministry was notably purified, the magistracy altered, the people strangely refined. It is true, at this time hardly the fifth part of the lords of Scotland were admitted to sit in Parliament; but those who did sit were esteemed truly godly men."¹

We find the presbytery of Perth and the minister of Abernethy involved in the "Engagement" trouble.

On May 24, 1648, we find the Laird of Arnote, Francis Murray, Patrick Wilkie, and Mr Alexander Moncrieff, minister at Scoonie in Fife (grandfather of Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie, ordained minister of Abernethy in 1720), sent as commissioners from the provincial meeting of Fife to the presbytery of Perth.

Signifying y^t in respect of the unlawfulness of the pñt ingagement They for themselves had intended and already prepared ane supplicatione to be presented by some of y^r number to the Ho^{ble} Estaites of parl. that they wold (the Kirk not being satisfied in y^r just desyres) desist from the said ingagement in Warre &c. And y^t for strentheing one anoy^r ask of this presb. wold advys upon the Lyk cours. Q^{uant}anent the bretheren being advysed Resolve ane pñt supplicatione to be drawn up unto the Committy of warre of the Schyre, desyring them to concurre with the presb. for supplicating of the parl. to the aforsaid effect. . . . And in the mean-tyme the Bretheren appoynted to intimat in y^r severall congregationes this pñt act read and allowed. Schewing y^r sense of the unlawfulness of the pñt ingagement. The Kirk not being satisfied in y^r just desyres and to Report y^r diligence of intima ne nixt day.

June 14, 1648.—Ane Act of the Commissione of the Gen. Asseb. daitat Ed^r 5, June 1648, presented Recommending . . . y^t these who declair not themselves against this present ingagement nor joyne with yr. brethren in yr.

¹ History, p. 48.

common resolutiones against the same, nor give publick informatione to y^r people of the unlawfulness y^rof, may be referred to the Gen. Assemb. And if any have declaired themselves for it to be publicly censured. Q^ranent the Bretheren being particularly asked declair them selfs y^t seing the Kirk hath not receaved satisfacione to yr. desyres And y^t y^rfoir they have declaired the Ingagement unlawful, they salbe cairfull to inform y^r people of the unlawfulness y^rof. And for yer selfs declaire y^t they judge the Ingagement altogether unlaw^l.

Mr Moncrieff, however, was evidently among those suspected "of subscribing of the Act of Estaites, allowing the lawfulness of this present Parliament and y^r proceedings to the present ingagement," &c., and on October 18, 1648, makes his defence to the presbytery, declaring his loyalty. It is interesting as showing the eagerness of the period.

Mr Ar. Moncreiff declares that he never sawe a supplicational sub^t or wryttine, but confesses that y^r was a meiting in the Kirk upon a wedd-nisday efternoone, and that Mr Alex^r Balneives did call him yrto befor dinner and came to him eftir dynner and broght him to ye meiting, and that Mr Georg Halliburtone propounded first in y^t meiting a motione concerning a supplicatione to be given in to ye Generall Assemblie. But for ye particulars y^rin contained he does not remember, but declares he protested that nothing in y^t meiting should be done destructive to ye covenant or y^{re} former supplicationes. Qrunto they answered god forbid.

He evidently had leanings towards a milder and more conciliatory course, which was not then in the ascendancy: the spirit of the time was very bitter, and the gentler influences were stifled. How needful then was the message to be repeated on both sides, "Little children, love one another."

The swearing of the Covenant was renewed with fasting, and among those reported to the presbytery "who wer excluded from renuing of ye Covenant according to ye Act," we find "Mr James Hamiltoune of Potie in ye paroch of Dunbairney; young Inner-nethie in Abernethie, Andrew Arnot, yr." We find, however, "that Mr James Hamiltone of Potie compeared, and denyed that ever he was for the Ingagment; and being posed whither he did speak

against the Covenant, denied y^t ever he was against it or spok against it in ye congrega^one. Lyke wyes he denied y^t ever he wrote a Letter showing y^t ever he was a freind to ye Ingagment."

On March 21, 1649, the presbytery, taking into consideration the declarations before specified of those who were active or instrumental or had any hand in promoting that unlawful Engagment, finds that the Laird of Innernethy, younger, and others mentioned "are excluded by ye act from renewing of ye Covenant qrbly they are referred to ye nixt Generall Assemblie."

There is an entry of the period which speaks of the introduction of the Catechism—

May 2, 1649.—The said day received a letter from Mr Andrew Ker dait 16 of April, 1649, bearing to recive twentie fyve copies of the Confession of faith, larger and shorter Catechismes.

We find that two are received by Mr Moncrieff, and before long there is no doubt he would have many other copies for the children of Abernethy.

The Records during the period of the Commonwealth (1649-60) witness to great dissensions in the district between the Resolutions and Protesters, and the intolerance of the latter bore bitter fruits. They struggled toward, and at last succeeded in attaining, the upper hand; and their influence is to be deplored in so far as they made the National League and Covenant a compulsory means both for the oppression of England and those who differed from them at home. The Puritans, with whom they co-operated, increased their fanaticism and inaugurated the reign of hair-splitting in Scotland. It ought to be recalled that very much of the morose unlovely form that Scottish religion assumed at this period, and long retained, was not a native growth but a foreign importation, introduced by Puritan influence from the South. Dogmatic and political dissensions agitated the Church during the period and absorbed its best forces; while maintenance

of religious differences and stubborn independence characterise the attitude of the Extreme Left that attained predominance. Small details were regarded as universal principles, and the spirit of the period is best understood by the saying of Samuel Rutherford: "In God's matters there is not, as in grammar, the positive and comparative degrees; there are not a true, a more true, and a most true. Truth is an indivisible line that hath no latitude." Jeremy Taylor was conscious of this weakness as a prevalent one in his day when he said—

Men are nowadays, and indeed always have been, since the expiration of the first blessed ages of Christianity, so in love with their own fancies and opinions, as to think faith and all Christendom is concerned in their support and maintenance; and whoever is not so fond and does not dandle them like themselves, it grows up to a quarrel, which, because it is *in materiâ theologiæ* is made a quarrel in religion, and God is entitled to it; and then, if you are once thought an enemy to God, it is our duty to persecute you even to death, we do God service in it.¹

When it is recalled that the Church interfered too much in the conduct of civil affairs, we can understand the bitterness and dissensions of the times. When "preaching up the times" was the general ideal of pulpit instruction, we can also in some degree measure the religious concerns of a Scottish parish during the period.

The sympathies of Mr Moncrieff, the minister of Abernethy during this period, seem to have been on the side of the Resolutioners.

There are parochial incidents during Mr Moncrieff's ministry, which we give as they occur.

There was some lingering belief in healing wells in the district:—

July 18, 1649.—Janat Dron in the parish of Dron compeared and confesses that she went, being unwell, to the well of Struehall, and that

¹ The Liberty of Propheying.

her brother conveyed her thereto with John Balmein, her father's man, and that there she used an unlawful means for acquiring of her health, which she particularly confessed and acknowledged before the Session of Dron as the Session-Book bears. Likewise compeared Andrew Dron, brother to the said Janat within the foresaid parish and confessed the same. Likewise compeared John Balmein in the foresaid parish, and confessed that he was desired to go with them to the foresaid well, whereupon they are appointed to satisfy conform to the act of Provincial Assembly, holden in Stirling in April last, made thereanent : viz., that the foresaid Andrew Dron and John Balmein sit three several Sabbaths in sackcloth, as also the said Janat Dron and evidence their repentance for the same.

August 1, 1649.—That intimation be made out of the several pulpits that none fee shearers on the Lord's day, or repair to Abernethy, or Dunning, or any other place for that effect ; and Mr Arch^d Moncrieff and his elders appointed to visit the Town of Abernethy, and if any condene to take up their names that they may satisfy publicly for the same.

August 29, 1649.—Mr Arch^d Moncrieff declares he has written to Fife anent the feeing of shearers on the Sabbath-day.

December 5, 1649.—A supplication given in by Mr Alex^r Balfour desiring a recommendation from the Presbytery unto the Commission for Plantation of Kirks for disjoining his lands of Abernethy. Mr W^m Bell and Mr James Campbell appointed to visit them.

December 12, 1649.—There was a supplication given in by my Lord Lundors, and Col. Ludwick Leslie his brother, desiring a visitation of their lands of Pitcairlie and Mugdrum, as also a letter from the commission for the same, and that they may have a recommendation from the Presbytery for adjoining these lands to the parish church of Newburgh, and the Presbytery ordains Mr W^m Bell and Mr James Campbell to visit them against the next day.

December 19, 1649.—This day the Presbytery having heard the report given in by Mr William Bell, minister at Drone, and Mr James Campbell, minister at Semidois, commissioners appointed by them to visit the lands of the parish of Abernethy, lying farthest East from the Parish Kirk thereof, and found thereby that the lands of Pitcairlie, Easter and Wester, pertaining to my Lord Lundores, and the lands of Colerine, his part thereof are nearer to the kirk of Newburgh than Abernethy a great deal and more of west : likewise that the lands of Mugdrum pertaining to Col. Ludwick Lesly are hard by the port of Newburgh, and two miles from Abernethy. Likewise that the lands of Wester Lumbinie and Legwill pertaining to Mr Alex^r Balfour, minister of Abdy, lies a great deal near and more to the kirk of Abdy than the kirk of Abernethy, therefore we recommend the disjunction

of the foresaid lands from Abernethy and their annexation to the respective kirks of Newburgh and Abdy to the Lords of Commission for the Plantation of Kirks.

January 1, 1650.—Mr William Row, who was appointed to confer with the Laird of Invermay and John Carmichael, brother-german to the Laird of Balmedie, reports that, after conference with them, he found them both sensible of their great guiltiness by their accession to the unlawful Engagement, and declared themselves willing to give any satisfaction the presbytery would require of them.

June 24, 1650.—Mr James Campbell did regret that many barks did loose anchors, and sail up the Tay on the Lord's day. Mr George Haliburton is appointed to draw up a letter to be sent to the presbytery of Fife and Dundee, and signify to them the foresaid breach of the Lord's day.

August 21, 1650.—There being advice craved by sundry of the brethren what shall be the satisfaction of fighters, flyters, and scolders, the presbytery appoints all fighters and tuilziers to satisfy publicly by sitting on a seat in face of the congregation; and flyters and scolders to be called up in their own seats and there to continue for their satisfaction till resolution from the General Assembly.

August 30, 1650.—The presbytery also ordains that there be intimation made through all the parishes within their bounds before every market in Perth that their parishioners beware of swearing on the streets, with certification they will be exemplarily punished, and recommended to the magistrate therefor.

December 18, 1660.—A letter received from the Commission of the Kirk recommending the reading of an Act for censuring such as act or comply with the Sectarian army, now infesting this kingdom; which was appointed to be copied and read thereafter in all the kirks within the presbytery.

December 30, 1650.—Lord Newburgh and others "are warned

apud acta to be present on Thursday next, which is appointed to be the next diet of meeting, in regard that many of the brethren will be at Scone at the sight of the King's Coronation on Wednesday next."

March 12, 1651.—The Laird of Innerneathie, having supplicated a long time before, did compear, and desired to evidence his repentance for his accession to the Engagement: he is appointed to confer with Mr David Weyms and Mr John Crookshank.

April 30, 1651.—A supplication presented by Mr James Hamilton of Kirkpottie bearing his accession to the late Engagement in putting forth of men, with his sorrow therefor desiring to renew the Covenant. The Presbytery not being satisfied therewith in regard that it was unequal, do appoint him to give in a more particular declaration of his accession to the Engagement against the next day, and withal to confer with Mr Arch^d Moncrieff, Mr William Row, and Mr James Gillespie, and afterward with his own minister, and they to report the next day.

June 4, 1651.—After several being "leeted" we find Sir David Carmichael of Balmedie chosen by "plurality of voices" ruling elder for the Dundee Assembly.

July 2, 1651.—A letter received from the Commission of the Kirk bearing that John Swintoun, younger of that ilk; William Dundas, brother to the Laird of Duddingstone; and Lieutenant Govean, for their complying with and going into that blasphemous army of sectaries; and Major Andrew, Abernethy, for that and his treacherous rendering of the Castle of Edinburgh to that enemy, were all excommunicated, and desiring intimation thereof to be made in their several congregations. The presbytery recommends to the brethren the intimation of the foresaid sentence, and to report their diligence thereanent.

"No meeting of the presbytery from the 30th of July until the 4th day of November in regard of the prevalent trouble in the land." It was about this period that Cromwell was at Perth and erected the citadel on the South Inch—one of the four raised

to overawe Scotland after the battle of Dunbar. It is said that the very gravestones and walls of Greyfriars' churchyard were used in its construction.¹

March 10, 1652.—There is a supplication presented from the prisoners taken at Dunbar, and now imprisoned in Tynemouth Castle, bearing their hard and necessitous condition, and desiring to be supplied by the charity of the presbytery. On April 8, 1652, Mr Moncrieff reports that Abernethy had done its duty in the matter.

May 18, 1653.—Mr Archibald Moncrieff craved advice anent the receiving of the Laird of Innernethie to the Covenant. The presbytery finding that he did supplicate, was conferred with, the report thereof given in to the presbytery, and the cause wherefore he was delayed removed, do appoint him to be received to the Covenant.

Compeared Sir William Auchinleck of Balmanno, and anent his desire concerning Mr William Weyms, giving assurance under his hand to the presbytery and to him that he would not take a presentation from the English.

People were then very keen against influence from across the Border.

June 29, 1653.—We find that David Drummond of Innernethy was appointed elder to the General Assembly.

In accordance with an Act of the Provincial Synod enjoining them "to go about the visitation of the kirks within their bounds conform to the Acts of Assemblie," the presbytery agreed to visit the kirk of Abernethy on the 9th July 1656. The visitation was continued for twelve sessions, and the Records state that the proceedings were "contained in the Booke of the Visitatione of Kirkes." Mr Moncrieff was suspended from his ministry at the kirk of Abernethy on January 21, 1657. The parishioners petition on several occasions for his restoration, but the presbytery refuse

¹ Note to Early Travels in Scotland, p. 171.

to grant it, and order the heritors and elders to proceed with the election of an assistant and successor. A report by way of recommendation was given on December 23, 1657, "against which voice the Laird of Colfargie did protest in respect there was not a sufficient competency condescended on for an able man, such as is fit for such an eminent charge and place;¹ and Carpow and Pitgrunzie did also protest in respect of the illegality of the procedure." Thus it is subscribed: "Extracted by M. Spense, Clerk of the Session."

The parish must have been in an unsettled condition for very long: we find the pulpit supplied by the presbytery; expectants being heard and rejected; both the people and Mr Moncrieff petitioning and craving the presbytery to "open his mouth"; and all this continued from 1657 to June 19, 1660,² when, after a most humiliating confession from the suspended minister, and a bond subscribed for salary to a helper, he is reponed.

¹ In the account of the Travels of Jorevin De Rocheford (1661), which were published in 1672 at Paris, we have a reference to Abernethy as one of the "principal towns" in Scotland, and there seems to have been a considerable seaport trade connected with it. The author says: "I know very well that the northern part of this kingdom beyond the river Tay is almost uninhabited on account of the high mountains which are only rocks, where there is no want of game in great quantities; but there grows but very little corn, which obliges the inhabitants of the interior parts of the country to subsist on fish, which they dry by means of the great cold, after having caught them in the lakes, which are to be found all over the kingdom; and some of the villages by the seaside export as much fish as furnishes them with corn and other necessities of life. It is said that there are certain provinces on that side of the country where the men are truly savage, and have neither law nor religion, and support a miserable existence by what they can catch. But I likewise know that the southern part of the kingdom on this side the Tay contains many fine towns, good seaports, great tracts of fertile land, and beautiful meadows filled with herds of all sorts of cattle; but the extreme cold prevents their growing to the common size, as is the case of all over Europe. The principal towns are, Edinbourg, Lyth, Sterling, Glasgo, Saint Andreaw, Abernethy, Dunkeld, Brechin, the old and new Aberdeen, the port of Cromary, Dornok, the town of St Johnstone [Perth], where are the four fine castles of Scotland."—See 'Early Travellers in Scotland,' edited by P. Hume Brown, p. 218.

² Such a condition of things could not exist now; but we have to recall that throughout this period the government of the Church was disordered, and that no General Assembly met until 1690.

The Presbytery taking the premises into their consideration, did and doth by these presents relax him from the sentence of suspension, and open his mouth and restore him to the exercise of his ministrie at Abernethy, with a helper to be joined with him in the ministrie as soon as possible may be.

The next incident in the parish annals reveals a kindly consideration for an unfortunate farmer.

November 21, 1660.—Compeared William Geddies, portioner of Easter Colsie, and produced a reference from the session of Abernethie, dated thereat November 18, 1660, bearing the great loss that his tenant John Johnston had sustained through the burning of his corn-yard, whereby he is likely with his family to be redacted to great indigence and famine, and desired that the Presbytery would recommend him to the several kirks within their bounds. The Presbytery, taking his case to consideration, do recommend him to the several kirks within their bounds for a charitable and timeous supply.

Mr Moncrieff's ministry was in troublous times: it was begun, as we have seen, in the reign of Charles I.; it was continued throughout the Commonwealth; it was ended during the episcopate of Charles II. He was present at the last meeting of presbytery (March 27, 1661) previous to the restoration of Episcopacy, and "approved in life and doctrine."

On October 29, 1662, we find Mr Moncrieff present at the meeting of presbytery when Mr Guthrie was appointed by the Archbishop of St Andrews moderator, and when Mr Guthrie announced that the acts of the diocesan synod would be sent shortly by the clerk, and inquired whether the brethren did ordinarily say the Lord's Prayer in divine worship, and if parents, when they presented their infants to the sacrament of baptism, or others who presented them in their name, did give a public confession of their faith, and if the doxology was sung after the singing of the psalm. Mr Moncrieff declared that he was observant of these things in his church.

The archbishop's letter of January 14, 1663 (*inter alia*), ordains

that the way of worship prescribed by the Directory should cease, and that the former way of reading Scripture before sermon by readers (where they may be had) be used, and that in towns there be public prayers and reading of Scripture to the people by the reader morning and evening. Also it is recommended to magistrates in burghs that they labour to have grave persons and of good qualification who may be employed in the reading of the Word.

May 20, 1663.—It is recommended to the brethren to intimate the next Lord's day in their several congregations that the 29th day of May instant be solemnly kept for his majesty's happy restoration to his kingdom. Mr Moncrieff reports at a subsequent meeting that he had done so.

August 26, 1663.—The brethren appoint the chaplains, pedagogues, and schoolmasters, who have not as yet taken the oath of allegiance, to be summoned to compear before the presbytery for taking the same the next day. The schoolmaster of Abernethy did so.

We find that Mr Moncrieff obeyed the injunction of his presbytery, November 15, 1665, in obedience to that Act of the synod anent the payment from stipends for the maintenance of the universities, and appointing that the several brethren within the diocese of St Andrews bring in the valuation of their stipends and their just proportions of the money betwixt this and the 1st of January 1666.

August 8, 1666.—We find that ministers in the presbytery of Perth are appointed to be more sparing in giving testimonials to persons who wander up and down, making thereby a trade of begging, whereby the land is oppressed, and if any such testimonial be given, it is to be under the moderator's hand.

If there be any persons inclining to Popery or Quakerism, they are to be delated to the archbishop that a course may be taken with them.

Where the Sabbath is profaned by men riding on that day, ministers are to make that known to the magistrates of the town where such horses are hired.

The Presbytery Records bear witness that Episcopacy was as intolerant as the Protesters had been;¹ and there are many instances of persecution against Papists and Quakers. Toleration was equally unknown during both *régimes*.

December 19, 1666.—It is recommended by the presbytery to the brethren of Perth to try if there be any private conventicles kept in Perth contrary to law.

January 23, 1667.—The presbytery having laid it upon the brethren of Perth to try if there were any private conventicles kept in Perth contrary to law, reported that they had tried and heard of none.

April 22, 1669.—The Lord Archbishop and synod appoint that in the case of persons who frequently absent themselves from the ordinances—that is, from the hearing of the Word and receiving of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—intimation be made from the pulpit that if they continue in this way they are to be processed with the censures of the Church.

It is appointed that no minister be absent from his charge two Sabbath-days together without leave from the moderator, and that they give such an excuse of their absence as shall be approved; and withal ministers are to be careful to provide for their people when they are from home themselves.

March 23, 1670.—The minute of this date, along with the one

¹ "The Government during the whole of this time treated the Presbyterian community as if it were a piece of iron which had to be beaten into a particular shape, and it transformed itself, as it were, into a hammer and anvil for the purpose; and the question of questions for Scotland was just this, Will hammer and anvil shape the iron, or will the iron break the hammer and anvil? On a people so circumstanced the chief demand is that it be firm, tenacious, patient, or what the oppressor will call stubborn, dour. That the Covenanters were so is their glory."—Professor Flint, *First Series of St Giles' Lectures*, pp. 208, 209.

just quoted, gives us a glimpse of Church life during the period. It is as follows: The moderator having inquired of the several brethren if they preached twice on the Lord's day, and gave the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper once a-year, catechised the people once a-week, and if the doxology was sung after the psalm on the Lord's day, and if parents, when they presented their children to baptism, gave a public confession of their faith, the brethren did declare that they were observant of these things.

October 5, 1670.—The Lord Archbishop and synod being informed that some persons go to the Border and marry there, contemning the order of the Church, judge that they should be delated to the civil magistrate that they may be fined according to law, and that they may be put to public declaration of their repentance, and be suspended from the Sacrament for the violating the order of the Church, and ministers be careful to give in the names of such persons to the synod at the next meeting, and what they have done in their censure.

May 31, 1671.—The following Act of synod reflects the bitter spirit of persecution:—

Among the many sinful distempers which are so prevalent in these times, there is none more apt and powerful to cause a decay of godliness, and to hinder the growth and advancement thereof, than a voluntary and unnecessary secession from the communion of the Church in the public and visible service of God, and the violation of peace and order; and because this so hurtful and pernicious sin is become so powerful in many as to cause them not only to withdraw from the public assembly, wherein God is worshipped in truth and purity, but obstinately to withhold their children from the benefit of baptism, whereby, under pretext of scruple and tenderness of conscience, they give sad evidences of high contempt for the ordinances of God and of the authority and constitution of his Church, by renouncing all communion therewith. Therefore for the preventing of the growth and propagation of a sin so destructive to piety and love, and for the asserting and vindication of the authority of his Church, it is appointed and ordained by the archbishop and synod that all such persons as persist in their wilful separation from the ordinances of Christ in the public and allowed assemblies of this Church, and refuse to bring

their children to be baptised by the orderly and approved ministers thereof, that they be proceeded against with the highest censures of this Church, if after all means used for their reclaiming they continue contumacious.

Mr Moncrieff died in 1671, aged about seventy-seven, and in the fifty-second year of his ministry. His executor declared "he had neither cornes, cattel, horses, nolt, sheep, insight, plenishing, nor other moveable goods or geir, except j^m ij^c xxxli. vjs. viij^d. of money"¹ (£1230, 6s. 8d.) He sold the estate of Balgony to William Oliphant in 1644.

How far Abernethy during the later years of Mr Moncrieff's ministry may have benefited by the saintly influence of Leighton it is impossible now to say: that he visited it yearly, however, with the other parishes in his diocese, it is impossible to doubt; we know that he regarded it as his duty to do so. The references in the Register to Mr Moncrieff are few: we find that he is excused for absence at Synod iv. on April 12, 1664; at Synod xvii. on October 11, 1670, "because of ordinarie sicknes and extreme age"; at Synod xvi., held in Blackford Church on April 20, 1670, we find that a helper was to be appointed to him.²

Bishop Leighton's influence cannot but have been felt in Abernethy as elsewhere, and he is the one great lovable personality during the period. To him questions of Church government were subordinate and secondary to the verities of the Christian religion, and in the troublous times amid which his lot was cast he struggled to reconcile Presbytery and Episcopacy. His policy was to inculcate the regular reading of Scripture in public worship; to adhere principally to Scripture exposition in preaching; to make regular use of the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Doxology in worship; to have frequent communion, and as far as possible daily service both at church and home.

One lingers over his lovely character, and feels a pride that

¹ *Fasti Eccles. Scot.*, Part iv. p. 623.

² Dr Wilson's Register of the Synod of Dunblane, pp. 9, 81, 78.

his church was connected with such a saint. Bishop Burnet thus wrote of him :—

I was formed to them by a bishop that had the greatest elevation of soul, the largest compass of knowledge, the most mortified and most heavenly disposition that I ever yet saw in mortal ; that had the greatest parts, as well as virtues, with the perfectest humility that I ever saw in man ; and had a sublime strain in preaching, with so grave a gesture, and such a majesty, both of thought, of language, and of pronunciation, that I never once saw a wandering eye where he preached ; and have seen whole assemblies often melt in tears before him ; and of whom I can say with great truth, that in a free and frequent conversation with him for above two-and-twenty years, I never knew him say an idle word that did not tend to edification ; and I never once saw him in any other temper but that which I wished to be in, in the last moments of my life. For that pattern which I saw in him, and for that conversation which I had with him, I know how much I have to answer to God ; and though my reflecting on that which I knew in him gives me just cause of being deeply humbled in myself, and before God, yet I feel no more sensible pleasure in anything than in going over in my thoughts all I saw and observed in him.¹

Leighton was connected with Dunblane from 1662-71 ; from 1671-74 he was Archbishop of Glasgow, although his new connection did not sever his relationship with his former diocese. In this parish history it will not be inappropriate to give the bishop's address to the synod of Dunblane—the very year in which he nominated Mr Moncrieff's successor at Abernethy. If Mr Jenkine was a man after Leighton's ideal, he must have been a consecrating influence at Abernethy.

GLASGOW, *April 6, 1671.*

REVEREND BRETHREN,—The superadded burden that I have here sits so heavy upon me that I cannot escape from under it to be with you at this time, but my heart and desires shall be with you, for a blessing from above upon your meeting. I have nothing to recommend to you, but (if you please) to take a review of things formerly agreed upon ; and such as you judge most useful, to renew the appointment of putting them in practice ; and to add whatsoever further shall occur to your thoughts, that may

¹ History of His Own Time, vol. ii. p. 243.

promote the happy discharge of your ministry and the good of your people's souls. I know I need not remind you, for I am confident you daily think of it, that the great principle of fidelity, and diligence and good success, in that great work, is love; and the great spring of love to souls, is love to him that bought them. He knew it well himself; and gave us to know it, when he said "Simon, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." Deep impressions of his blessed name upon our hearts will not fail to produce lively expressions of it, not only in our words and discourses, in private and public, but will make the whole track of our lives to be a true copy and transcript of his holy life. And if there be within us any sparks of that Divine love, you know the best way, not only to preserve them, but to excite them, and blow them up into a flame, is by the breath of prayer. Oh prayer! the converse of the soul with God, the breath of God in man returning to its original, frequent and fervent prayer, the better half of our whole work, and that which makes the other half lively and effectual; as that holy company tells us, when appointing deacons to serve the tables, they add, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and the ministry of the word." And is it not, brethren, our unspeakable advantage, beyond all the gainful and honourable employments of the world, that the whole work of our particular calling is a kind of living in heaven, and besides its tendency to the saving of the souls of others, is all along so proper and adapted to the purifying and saving of our own? But you will possibly say, What does he himself that speaks these things unto us? Alas! I am ashamed to tell you. All I dare say is this: I think I see the beauty of holiness and am enamoured with it though I attain it not; and how little soever I attain, would rather live and die in the pursuit of it, than in the pursuit, yea, or in the possession and enjoyment, though unpursued, of all the advantages that this world affords. And I trust, dear brethren, you are of the same opinion, and have the same desire and design, and follow it both more diligently, and with better success. But I will stop here, lest I should forget myself, and possibly run on till I have wearied you, if I have not done that already; and yet if it be so, I will hope for easy pardon at your hands, as of a fault I have not been accustomed to heretofore, nor am likely hereafter often to commit. To the all-powerful grace of our great Lord and Master, I recommend you, and your flocks, and your whole work amongst them; and do earnestly entreat your prayers for your unworthiest, but most affectionate, brother and servant,

R. LEIGHTON.

Such was the personality of this "angelical and apostolical man" as described by an intimate friend, and unfolded in his own letter: it may be asked, What were the views on Church government by

which he sought to mediate between the two parties? As given by Burnet, they are as follows:—

1. That the Church should be governed by the bishops and clergy, mixing together in the Church judicatories, in which the bishop should act only as a president, and be determined by the majority of his presbyters, both in matters of jurisdiction and ordination.

2. That the presbyters should be allowed, when they first sat down in their judicatories, to declare that their sitting under a bishop was submitted to by them for peace sake; with a reservation of their opinion with relation to any such presidency; and that no negative vote should be claimed by the bishop.

3. That bishops should go to the churches, in which such as were candidates for ordination were to serve, and hear and discuss any exceptions that were made to them, and ordain them with the concurrence of the presbytery.

4. That such as were to be ordained should have leave to declare their opinion, if they held that the bishop was only the head of the presbyters.

5. That provincial synods should sit in course every third year, or oftener if the king summoned them; in which complaints of the bishops should be received, and they should be censured according to their deserts.

Such was the accommodation Leighton proposed, but the bitterness of the time rejected it: yet had it been accepted, the Scotland of to-day ecclesiastically would have been very different from what it is.

We are interested more specially in him here, however, from the following:—

July 26, 1671.—Received from the Bishop of Dunblane a letter desiring the presbytery to enter Mr Robert Junkine on his trials in order to his admission to the function of the ministry at the church of Abernethy, in regard whereof the presbytery does appoint that the

addition formerly laid on him shall stand for the first part of his trials. . . . Mr Robert Junkine appointed to preach at Abernethy at his convenience at least every fortnight during the time of his trials.

December 27, 1671.—This day Mr Robert Junkine produced a letter from the Lord Archbishop of St Andrews desiring the presbytery to appoint one of their number to preach at Abernethy at the admission of the said Mr Robert Junkine to the function of the holy ministry at the said church of Abernethy. In obedience thereto the presbytery have appointed their reverend brother Mr Thomas Fowler to preach at the said admission the next presbytery day.

At Abernethy, the 17th of January 1672—

Which day as the ministers were entering to the church of Abernethy for the admission of Mr Robert Junkine to the exercise of his ministry there, compeared Mr Patrick Coupar and Andrew Duncane, servitors of my Lord and the tutor of Stormonth, and did in the name of the tutor of Stormonth and my Lord his pupil, in presence of the moderator and remanent brethren there present, protest that the admission of the said Mr Robert to the said church of Abernethy by virtue of a presentation from the king's majesty might be in ways prejudicial to the right of patronage which my Lord Stormonth did claim to the said church, and upon this their protestation they took instruments in the clerk of the presbytery his hand, and desired it to be marked in the presbytery book.

The said day the brethren being met, Mr Robert Junkine was admitted to the function of the holy ministry at the said church of Abernethy, and Mr Thomas Fowler preached.

March 6, 1678.—We find that Mr William Moncrieff, school-master at Abernethy, subscribed along with others the Act of synod, testifying their consent unto and approbation of the present government of the Church as it is established by law, and promised to live peaceably under the government, and to do nothing to the prejudice thereof, and are willing that this remain in the presbytery books "in futuram rei memoriam." As far as can be judged from the Records, Mr Junkine seems to have been a quiet zealous man, but the Records also show that the Episcopal party which he represented was not a favourite one among the people in the district.

March 2, 1681.—The Archbishop and synod being deeply sensible of the great discouragement the orderly and orthodox ministers labour under by reason of that many vagrant conventicle preachers and others that in certain places of the diocese, especially in Fife, do keep weekly preachings in their houses to the great disturbance of the peace and unity of the congregations where they reside and the next adjacent; therefore it is thought fit that the several moderators should give to the clerk a list of the names of all such whether—or settled that the Archbishop his Grace may make use thereof as he shall find convenient.

We know very few particulars regarding the affairs of the parish during his ministry, but he seems to have been earnest in his desire to promote the comeliness of the parish church, as the Synod Records bear evidence.

At Dunblane, on the 30th September 1673, the bishop (Ramsay) and synod being convened,

And after invocacioun of the name of God the roll was read, and none found to be absent, except those who were absent in the forenoone.

The quhilk day Mr Robert Jenkines, minister at Aberneathie, for himselfe, and in name of the heritores of the said paroch, did represent the ruinous condition of the said kirk to the Bishop and Synod, and desyred ane commission to be given to soome of the brethren of the Synod to take the most effectuall course for the accomodating of the respective heritores with seates, as the best expedient for repairing of the said fabrick. The quich desyre the Bishop and Synod judged reasonable, and for the accomplishing whereof they have commissioned, and be thir presents commissionate, Messrs Archibald and James Drumondes, Robert Friebarne, William Spence and John Omei, to cognosce and determine in the said bussines as they shall think fitt and expedient; as also to tak inspection of the minister's manse, and in respect of ane former condescention betwixt the heritores anent the taking of another house for his present accomodacioun; and that the said brethren for the prosecucioun thereof would deall with the heritores to use all diligence for the uplifting of their severall proportiones for that effect—ay, untill the mans be put in case for his accomodacioun.¹

¹ Register of the Diocesan Synod of Dunblane, edited by the Rev. Dr Wilson, p. 97.

Again we read that at the synod meeting held at Dunblane on 14th April 1674—

The brethren underwritin, within the Presbyterie of Ochterardor, who formerlie were commissionat be the Bishop and Synod for keiping of a visitacioun at the kirk of Aberneathie, for the reasons therein containd, did report to the Byshope and Synod that there was nothing as yet concludit in that bussines in order to their commission, in respect of severall debates amongst the heretores of the said paroch ; and as yet the kirk remains unrepaired, because of the unwillingnes of the heretores to contribute amongst themselves for the samyne. Therefore the Bishop and Synod ordaines Messrs Archibald and James Drumondes, Robert Fribairne, William Spence, James Row and Mr James Huntare, ministers within the foresaid Presbyterie, to meit at Aberneathie upon the twentie day of May nixt to come, and keip a visitacioun of the said church ; and the Bishope himself is to be present with the said brethren the foresaid day, to cognosce and determine anent the seates within the said church, and the long litigious contencionnes thereanent, as also anent the reparacioun of the fabrick of the said church, neglected and become ruinous through the contentiones foresaid ; and lykwise anent the manss and other conveniences for the minister of the said place, according to the law and custome of this church ; for which end the minister is appointed to give tymous advertisement to all concerned to be present the said day.¹

The Parish Records tell that the heritors of the parish being summoned according to intimation from the pulpit on March 30, 1680—

And finding the said Mr Robert in times past not to be so well accommodated as he ought and should have been ; and now being resolved for the future that he and his successors, and ministers at the said kirk, should be better provided ; therefore they for his better encouragement have unanimously condescended and agreed that the said Mr Robert shall have the sum of one thousand and thirty marks, Scotch money, for building to himself a convenient manse ; with the sum of two hundred and three score and ten marks money, in satisfaction to him of all house walls.

Mr Junkine did not enjoy his new manse very long, for at the

¹ Register of the Diocesan Synod of Dunblane, p. 106.

Revolution he was deposed by the Council for not praying for William and Mary, on the 7th of September 1689. He was thus one of those who suffered from "the rabbling of the curates," begun on Christmas 1688, and lasting for several months. In connection with it we should recall the words of Professor Flint—

In order not to judge too harshly the "rabbling of the curates" in 1688, we must remember the ejection of the ministers in 1661; but in order not to judge of it too leniently, we must also remember that the ejection of the ministers had been itself preceded by the expulsion of the Episcopal clergy in 1639, and that one reason why there were so few non-Covenanters in certain districts of the west was that the war committees of the Covenanters in 1640 had driven so many of them away and left them nothing to which to return.¹

The Jacobite element seems to have been strong in the parish, and several of the former elders did not accept reordination in the Church of the Revolution Settlement.

On February 4, 1691, Colfargie and Gruinside presented to the presbytery a call from the parish of Abernethy for Mr Alexander Dunning to be their minister. The presbytery recommend to him to have serious thoughts thereanent, and that the affair may not be delayed, prescribe to him a common head.

The presbytery met at Abernethy on April 29, 1691, and ordained Mr Dunning minister of the parish. He was previously an expectant or probationer within the bounds of the presbytery.

July 21, 1708.—For the propagation of Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands we find that Mr Dunning subscribed a bond for ten pounds Scots.² On May 13, 1710, we find the parish gave for the same purpose two hundred pounds Scots.

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 224.

² "In point of fact there were parts of the Highlands and Islands where Popery, not paganism, still lingered; and to the acknowledgment of this fact the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge owes its origin. It originated in the very year of the Union, was fostered by the Church, and received royal institution and sanction two years later."—Principal Tulloch, First Series, St Giles' Lectures, p. 259.

January 27, 1709.—A letter from the Commission of the General Assembly to the presbytery desires that they will be pleased to send over to Mr Samuel Temple at Edinburgh (who is compiling a history of the late times) an account of what sufferings were in their bounds. In answer thereto the presbytery appointed all the ministers to make search within their several congregations and send what accounts they get to Mr Colquhoun, Mr Alexander Dunning, and Mr John Gulledeysh, who are a committee appointed by the presbytery to collect the several accounts in the bounds of the presbytery, and to ripen the same in order to be transmitted. The committee met in Mr Dunning's house. The presbytery promise all the help and concurrence they can.

It is interesting to notice the purposes for which collections were taken in those days. *January 18, 1710*, we find that Abernethy sent a handsome collection to restore the ruins of "the burning in the head of the Canongate."

July 11, 1716.—The presbytery having caused to be read the Act of synod appointing presbyteries to search what compliance had been among ministers, elders, deacons, precentors, and schoolmasters in their bounds of their own communion with respect to the late Rebellion, and conjure them as they should see cause. Members were then interrogated, but Mr Dunning has no case to report from Abernethy.

The presbytery desire that the schools should be loyal, and required that schoolmasters sign the formula appointed by law.

There was at this time a student who was destined to attain fame, and to take part in a movement that became historical in Scotland, and is now represented in a great Church—Mr Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie.

July 9, 1718.—It having been reported that Mr Alexander Moncrieff is a person piously disposed and of good literature, and is well reported of the brethren of his acquaintance; therefore they appoint the three ministers of Perth to discourse him, and signify

to him the inclination the presbytery have for him to pass trials for the ministry, and report next presbytery day withal; the presbytery hereby declares that this shall be no precedent in all ordinary cases, though he has not been a student of Divinity the full number of years appointed by Acts of Assembly.

The minute strikes one: the presbytery evidently felt that their student was a remarkable man, while the latter part of the minute refers evidently to the fact that he had only taken part of his Divinity course in a Scottish university, and had completed his theological lectures by attending the Dutch University at Leyden.

July 23, 1718.—The ministers not yet having had the opportunity to “discourse” Mr Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie, the presbytery continues the appointment to “commune” with him betwixt this and their next meeting. He was evidently not entering upon his trials in a thoughtless, but in a thoughtful, earnest spirit. August 6, 1718, he desires the reverend presbytery may please to drop the matter for a considerable time; but being further pressed, he promised to have it under consideration until the next day.

October 8, 1718.—Culfargie still asks for delay. The presbytery leaves it to the foresaid brethren with Mr Moncrieff (of Methven) to discourse him further with respect to that matter, and when they find that he has clearness to enter upon trials, to report the same. He was evidently in the midst of a spiritual struggle which lasted for a considerable period, until he finally made up his mind to go forward.

December 10, 1718.—The brethren that were appointed some time ago to commune with Mr Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie anent his entering upon probationary trials, reported that they had done accordingly, and they hope he will comply with the presbytery's desire. He being called, and compearing, gave in his testimonials, which were read, and the presbytery were very well satisfied

therewith. Then the questions appointed by the General Assembly to be put to young men before they be taken on trials were proposed to him, and the said Mr Moncrieff having given satisfying answers to the said questions, they appoint him for a homily to be delivered against the next ordinary meeting of presbytery, which is to be this day six weeks—Proverbs xii. 26, first clause, “The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.” And they ordain the moderator to write to the several presbyteries in the synod to acquaint them of the presbytery’s design of entering the said Mr Moncrieff upon trials (according to Act of Assembly), to know if they have anything to object against the same.

January 21, 1719.—No objections were found by the presbyteries, the homily was read, unanimously approved of, and the common head was appointed—viz., “An Christi obedientia actiba ad justificationem sit necessaria?”

February 25, 1719.—Mr Moncrieff delivered his common head, which was unanimously approved. His exercise and addition were appointed—I Thess. ii. 13, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

March 25, 1719.—The exercise and addition were approved; the presbytery appoints for a lecture Psalm xxii. 21-31. Likewise for his trial in the skill in the Hebrew language to expound the 28th Psalm; for Greek, *ad aperturam libri*; also to answer Catholic questions and have all *extempore* trials.

Mr Alexander Moncrieff having given in his thesis, the presbytery appoints Mr Pilmar and Mr Lyon to impugn the same next presbytery day.

April 29, 1719.—Mr Alexander Moncrieff defended his thesis, expounded a portion of the New Testament in Greek *ad aperturam libri*; likewise expounded a part of the 28th Psalm for the trial of

his skill in the Hebrew language. Answered chronological questions on the second half of the fifth century. And also answered several Catholic questions that were put to him. Thereafter he was removed. And the brethren being inquired how they were satisfied with these and all his former pieces of trials, answered they were very well satisfied therewith, and do unanimously approve of all his several pieces of trials. He being called in and this intimated to him, and being desired to sign the Confession of Faith and formula thereto subjoined, he signed the same accordingly. And being seriously and gravely exhorted by the moderator, the presbytery did and hereby do licence the said Mr Alexander Moncrieff to preach the Gospel as a probationer for the ministry.

A very conscientious probationer, and an equally conscientious presbytery. The long course of examination is not only interesting for itself, but also for its connection with a man who, as we shall see in the next chapter, took an important place in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland. Only for a short space must we leave Mr Moncrieff, as we shall find before long that he was appointed minister of the parish, in succession to Mr Dunning, who seems to have been a quiet and faithful minister, appearing little in church courts, but doing his work earnestly and efficiently. His name appears very seldom in the Records, and only in connection with Christian work, such as, "Collection taken at Abernethy by Mr Dunning on behalf of the distressed Church of Lithuania [November 5, 1718], twenty-five pounds four shillings." He died July 20, 1719, after having served his parish for twenty-eight years.

It is interesting to recall a reference to Abernethy and its ancient church, now demolished, but still standing during Mr Dunning's ministry. I found it in a manuscript volume preserved in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh. The volume is entitled 'Geographical Collections relating to Scotland, containing particular description of Shires, Parishes, Burroughs, &c., in the Kingdom,'

vol. i. (1718). The description of Abernethy, given in 1718, is from the pen of Mr John Taylor:—

Lykways there was in it ane Colledge yth yet the ruines of it remain. Likways there is in it A Great Church with pillars which yet remain in its noble fabrick, it was destroyed from its primitive magnificence by Kenneth King of Scots, yea it is the misfortune of this ancient place to be said of it, as was said of old—

*Jam seges est, ubi Troia fuit.*¹

It does not speak well for the enlightened liberality of the heritors, nor for a healthy prevalent opinion among the people of 1800 A.D., that they allowed this grand church, second to no other in Scotland for historical interest, to be demolished. Unhappily since the Reformation there was lost not only the sense of ecclesiastical beauty but of ecclesiastical fitness, though better taste and feeling are now restoring both. Would that during the interval the “pillars” and “noble fabric” had not been ruthlessly swept away! it would have been a cherished pride to have restored them to-day. Although the fabric must have undergone many improvements, the interest of it lay in the fact that it visibly connected the Church of the eighteenth century with the Celtic period.

The parish being now vacant by Mr Dunning’s death, and after a lengthened turmoil between patron and people, we find that the election of a minister by the *jus devolutum* had fallen into the hands of the presbytery; but in accordance with the custom of the period, they extended to the heritors, elders, and heads of families the right of election.

March 30, 1720.—All being unanimous, the presbytery sustained the call, and on September 14, 1720, Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie was ordained minister of the parish by the presbytery of Perth, his uncle, the Rev. William Moncrieff of Methven, conducting

¹ P. 136.

the ordination service and preaching from Colossians iv. 17, "And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfil it."

We will devote the next chapter to the movement in which the minister of Abernethy took an important part, and which finally led to his secession from the Church of Scotland.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE REV. ALEXANDER MONCRIEFF OF CULFARGIE
AND THE SECESSION.

"Every one who is himself in earnest, must of course see much to condemn in what many others are earnest about. But I don't know why that should keep us from seeing, in great movements of the individual and private spirit, in efforts after reform and perfection, which perhaps we most thoroughly dislike from our several points of view—say, in Monasticism, in the theology of the Schoolmen, in the mendicant orders, in Puritanism, in the many phases of Nonconformity, in the company of Jesus, in the noble but vain revolt of Jansenism—much which the world could ill afford to be without. Certainly, as I read of history, it is difficult to say how much we all owe to every one of these many opposite movements, in which men, obstinately and devotedly, counting no cost and reserving no retreat, have given themselves to fulfil some high purpose which their own hearts and thoughts had shown them, and about which no one at first thought and felt like them."—DEAN CHURCH.

THE chapter now to be written is a difficult one, and I desire to approach it in the spirit of the above-quoted words.

Patronage has proved itself to be the chief source of all the unhappy divisions in Scotland since the Revolution Settlement; in fact, it forms the centre around which all these ecclesiastical differences have revolved. The spirit in which the Seceders of 1733 regarded the Patronage Act of 1712, with the Toleration Act of the same year, is best discerned from the words of John Brown of Haddington:—

These Acts, so hastily passed, exceedingly alarmed the Scotch Presbyterians. The Toleration enervated their discipline, and encouraged the

Jacobites in their rudeness and influence towards the established religion and clergy, and opened a door for almost every error and abomination in the worship of God. The restoration of Patronage was calculated to fill the Church with Jacobitish or naughty clergymen by means of solicitations or simoniacal pactions, and so occasion much perjury in their ordination vows, and render their ministrations contemptible, useless, and hurtful. The imposition of the abjuration oath on ministers as a condition of their entrance to, or exercise of, their office, rendered them more and more the slaves of an Erastian Court,—tended to debauch their consciences, in taking oaths without any necessity, or even without due certainty of their lawfulness, or any plain tendency to the honour of God—and to diminish their zeal for their covenanted reformation and Presbyterian government, and render them approvers of the perjurious settlement of religion by the incorporating union with England;—and threatened, as it soon actually did, to produce the most mournful divisions among ministers or between them and their hearers.¹

These words indicate the feeling that then existed in Scotland, and it was felt that the Act of Parliament, passed by the Tory Ministry of the latter part of Queen Anne's reign, restoring patronage, was intended to operate against the Whigs of Scotland, whom they found to be active and steady opponents of their measures.²

Taking all the facts of the case into consideration, it seems to be true to say that political feeling found its expression in the Secession, as well as the spirit which had not yet grasped the meaning of religious toleration. The Parliament of Queen Anne, considering the persecution of Greenshields in Edinburgh, who merely desired to meet and hold service according to the forms of the Church of England,—a persecution which Principal Tulloch considered as a "miserable business, reflecting credit neither on the General Assembly nor on the magistrates of Edinburgh,"³—passed the Toleration Act of 1712, by which Episcopalians should

¹ A Compendious History of the Church of Scotland, pp. 348, 349.

² Life of Erskine, by Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, p. 434.

³ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 260.

not be disturbed in the exercise of their religious worship. It is not a pleasant reflection to recall that the Church of Carstares did all it could to oppose such a righteous and much-needed law.

The Legislature did not stop with the Toleration Act. They forced another law upon an unwilling Church—the Act of 1712 for the restoration of patronage. Principal Tulloch has said:—

There are features in the Church of the eighteenth century which would no doubt have been the same although lay Patronage had not been restored; but the history of Scottish Presbyterianism would have been entirely different if the Tory politicians of Queen Anne had only left undisturbed the settlement of the Patronage question made in 1690 by the same Parliament of William and Mary as re-established the Church. . . . The Act of 1690 gave the initiative or right of nomination to the heritors and elders or kirk-session of each parish, who were taken bound to pay to the respective patrons a small sum of money, for which they were supposed to renounce their rights for ever. It is needless to ask whether this was a good settlement of the question in itself. It does not seem to have worked smoothly; but then no system could have worked smoothly at such a time when many parishes were still alienated from the dominant Presbyterianism, and disputes as to the succession of ministers were necessarily engendered. The one thing that demands our attention is, that the lay patron had disappeared under solemn statutory enactment. That form of Patronage which the Church, or at least those supposed most entitled to represent it, always felt as a “heavy grievance” had been constitutionally removed. It had been unknown to Scottish Presbyterianism for upwards of sixty years, and it is hardly possible to conceive anything more unwise or unjust than its restitution. Carstares did all he could to prevent it, but in vain. The well-known Act of Queen Anne finally passed both Houses of Parliament by large majorities, and received the royal assent on the 22nd April 1712.¹

Controversy arose between two rival parties in the Church on the subject of a call, and as to the persons in whom the right was to be vested. Was it to be the congregation, or only the kirk-session and heritors? It was not until 1732 that this question

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, pp. 260, 261.

was definitely raised in the Church, and the raising of it was one of the chief causes that led, as we shall immediately see, to the Secession.

This movement, which is known as the Secession [says the biographer of Principal Cairns], was entirely different in its character from the Disruption, in which 110 years later the Free Church originated. It sprang, not as the latter did from a conflict between the Church and State, but from the conduct of Church courts in dealing with Church affairs. The "contumacious" ministers had protested against the toleration of doctrinal error by the General Assembly and the enforcement upon presbyteries and congregations of ministers appointed by lay patrons; and they had openly condemned the general policy then prevailing in the Church.¹

We shall hear more of this at a later part of the chapter, but meanwhile it is necessary to recall other outstanding events in the ecclesiastical life of the period which exercised an influence over the minds of the Secession leaders. These were the Simson case and the "Marrow Controversy," and both of them reflect the new spirit of the age on its intellectual and theological side.

Times were now changed since the days of the Covenants; in fact, the very principles for which the Covenants had contended seemed to the majority to have been realised, so far as they legitimately could, in the Church of the Revolution Settlement. The troublous times prior to the Revolution were becoming a memory; the enthusiasms that they had awakened were considerably lessened; the Hanoverian dynasty was consolidated in the country, and the inevitable reaction had set in, after all the heat and passion of the Covenanting period: people were gradually accepting the Presbyterian Church as the settled order of things, and reconciling themselves to patronage as best they could: a new race of clergy was appearing affected by the spirit of the age, and inclined to relax the old rigorous statement of doctrine, and to accept new forms of preaching that seemed to them to be

¹ Life and Letters of John Cairns, D.D., LL.D., by Dr MacEwen, pp. 23, 24.

more in harmony with the literary canons of the period. The change is regarded by Principal Tulloch as dating from about 1720;¹ and although the terms "popular" and "moderate" party were not yet heard of, although it was twenty years later before they assumed the features that afterwards differentiated them from each other, yet the germs are already visible, and they are germs filled with the potency of life. Changes were inevitable in the nature of things, but this change was not acceptable to men like the Erskines, Wodrow, Boston, and their associates. Such were the apostles of an age that was passing, and the dawning era was not pleasing to them.

The difficulties of the Church were partly doctrinal and partly administrative, and it is with the former as they are represented in the case of Professor Simson and the "Marrow Controversy" that we have now to do. The trial of Professor Simson is regarded by Dr Cunningham as one of the most memorable in the history of the Church,² and he figures in the history of the period as the Scottish heresiarch. The case excited widespread interest, was the subject of the opening sermon at the Assembly of 1727, and even exerted its influence upon the choice of the Moderator. Simson was on two occasions the subject of trial. In 1714 his theological opinions were under the notice of the Church courts, and after being dealt with by the presbytery of Glasgow, his teaching was censured by the General Assembly to the effect "that he had vented unnecessary opinions and used expressions in a bad and unsound sense, and attributed too much to the powers of natural reason and corrupt human nature." Ten years later Simson was again summoned for heresy: on the first occasion his views were regarded as tending towards Pelagianism; on the second occasion they were supposed to hover towards Arianism or semi-Arianism. The case is a very difficult one, and we

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 263.

² History of Church of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 274.

give the view of it as stated by an impartial scholar already quoted:—

It is difficult to express any definite opinion of Simson's case. On the one hand, he himself fails to interest us—even if we judge him in some degree a victim of persecution. He is throughout a veiled and vacillating figure, seldom appearing except in the background as an argumentative valetudinarian, who makes endless explanations without reaching any results satisfactory to his accusers. Wodrow represents him as a man of restless argumentative tendency, who delighted to stir the theological atmosphere around him, without much real depth or reflective thoughtfulness. But his letters, and especially the first letter of date March 2, 1726, give a higher idea of his intelligence and learning, if they are also marked by a strangely querulous spirit. On the other hand, Simson's accusers seem captious and unfair in refusing to acknowledge the apparent honesty of many of his explanations, and especially in submitting the Glasgow students to a process of examination as to any unguarded utterances he may have used in the course of his teaching. The process did not end till 1729, when the General Assembly, heartily tired of it, as their minute implies, brought it to an issue by suspending the Professor permanently from his functions of teaching and preaching. As a whole the case is highly significant of a certain restlessness of thought in the Church, and at the same time of the very narrow limits within which it was possible for this thought to express itself without incurring censure. Younger minds were beginning to move out of the old dogmatic restraints; but the great majority of the clergy had no idea of relaxing even the old modes of expression, far less the old doctrines.¹

The opinion was widespread that the sentence ought to have been deposition² and not suspension, and that consequently the Assembly had not gone far enough. This opinion was represented by Thomas Boston, a minister of the old school, who rose and said: "Moderator, I find myself laid under a necessity of declaring my

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 266.

² "Though inspired by the most intense and narrow orthodoxy, this secession was a symptom of the growth of the opposite spirit, for it was essentially a protest against the increasing laxity, both in dogma and practice, which was displayed by some sections of the Scotch Presbyterians. This liberal movement was greatly strengthened by Francis Hutcheson, who held the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow from 1729 till his death in 1747."—Lecky's *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii. p. 538.

dissent from this decision of the Assembly, as I think the censure inflicted by it on Professor Simson is not adequate to the offence he has given, as to the points of doctrine that have been proved he taught the students under his care, and have been found relevant to infer censure. . . . For myself I crave leave to enter my protest against the decision of this act." The Moderator appealed to him not to do anything "that may have a tendency to rend and divide this Church," but Boston was uncompromising.¹

This was the celebrated Thomas Boston, the minister of Ettrick, the author of the 'Fourfold State,' and the advocate of the "Marrow Divinity." Simson's case represented the negative line of thought that was advancing in the Church, while the "Marrow men," as they were designated, represented the conservative side, which was distinguished by its doctrinal enthusiasm. Perhaps the position of the latter may be best described by saying that their theology represented an extreme type of Evangelical Calvinism, closely resembling that of Jonathan Edwards. The "Marrow men" so emphasised the power of divine grace that it led to the denial of any activity in the human will, and the Auchterarder formula was its representative expression when it stated, "I believe that it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ." The Auchterarder presbytery required all candidates for the ministry to sign this formula, and the General Assembly of 1717 condemned their requirement. The older clergy dissented from the finding of the Assembly, and approved of the condemned formula.

As the "Marrow Controversy" had considerable influence over the Seceders, it will be necessary to state its origin. While minister of the now suppressed parish of Simprin, Boston had come across a volume in a cottage which much interested him,

¹ M'Kerrow's *History of the Secession Church*, pp. 24, 25.

and was entitled the 'Marrow of Modern Divinity.' Boston read the book, was delighted with it, and lent it to friends for perusal. The author was an Oxford gentleman commoner of Brazenose College, named Edward Fisher, and Boston was the means of popularising this book of dogmatic Puritan theology in Scotland. One of the friends to whom he lent it was James Hog, minister of Carnock, who republished it in 1718 with a preface. Principal Tulloch regards it as learned, lively, if no longer very readable.

It contains much that is both true and sound in doctrine; but the form of it, as may be easily imagined, suggests paradox and overstatement. Many of its propositions were capable of a dangerous interpretation—such as that "the believer was not under the law, and that he does not commit sin." Nothing could seem more wildly Antinomian, and yet the intended meaning was probably no more than that Christ is all in all to the believer, and that God looks not upon the sinner himself but on Christ, in whom he is delivered from all sin. Here, as everywhere in theological controversy, if the terms could only be settled beforehand, the controversy might almost cease. The "Marrow men" certainly did not mean to teach, any more, we suppose, than the Auchterarder presbytery, that a believer is freed from the obligation of the Christian life, however incautiously they may have expressed themselves.¹

The book was denounced from many pulpits, and in 1720 the General Assembly condemned it, and forbade it to be circulated. The "Marrow men" protested, and held a meeting in Edinburgh, at which Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine were present. Two years later they appealed to the Assembly, and the court so far modified their sentence, but rebuked the petitioners "for injurious and undutiful aspersions cast upon the supreme judicatory of the Church. The General Assembly," it was added, "had no design to recede from the received doctrine of the Church; but those, on the other hand, who impugned its judgment, laid themselves under the suspicion that they favoured the Antinomian heresies censured in the Act passed against the 'Marrow of Modern

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 268.

Divinity.' In accepting the rebuke, they declared that they would still consider it lawful "to bear testimony unto the truths condemned." Thus did the "Marrow men," who had now increased to twelve, including the Erskines, defend what they regarded as truth. Well has Dr Mitchell of South Leith said: "The doctrines of the Marrow, however, were neither refuted nor destroyed, but spread throughout Scotland, and became the source of spiritual life to many a soul; and, unguarded and exaggerated though many of its statements are, and by no means to be received without qualification, there are few books so worthy of republication even now, or which would be more likely, under God, to counteract the negative theology which is at present so prevalent. We owe, in this nineteenth century, a very deep debt of gratitude to those twelve brave men who contended so earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."¹

Erskine and his brethren were soon again to be in antagonism to Church courts—an antagonism which before long was to result in a secession. The breach was begun by the decisions of the Assembly in the case of Professor Simson and the Marrow Controversy, but it was soon to be aggravated by the question of patronage. We have already seen that patronage was restored in 1712, and that the question of the "call" was not loudly raised until 1732. "From the year 1649," says Dr Cunningham, "it was customary for the congregation to show their approbation of the person selected by the session, by giving him a formal call to be their minister. Even after the restoration of patronage this call was regarded as more essential to a settlement than a presentation. Between 1712 and 1730 there were many settlements without presentations; no case is known of a settlement without a call."² The question of the call was loudly raised in 1732, and the doctrinal complication, already indicated, was much increased by

¹ Lecture on Ebenezer Erskine, 'St Giles' Lectures,' Third Series, pp. 155, 156.

² Church History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 280.

the Act passed in the Assembly of that year, which stipulated that the minister should be chosen "by the majority of the elders and heritors, if Protestants," where the patrons had failed to exercise their right of presentation. No voice was then given to the congregations, and it was not necessary for the patrons to belong to the Church of Scotland. It is true to say that no proceeding of a General Assembly was ever followed by consequences which have left such a permanent effect upon the ecclesiastical life of the country, and a protest was loudly raised against it by the popular party in the Church. Men like the Erskines saw in the condition of the Church "a defection from Reformed and Covenanting principles," and it was as representatives of "the true Presbyterian Covenanted Church of Scotland" that they entered on the struggle and continued it with no lack of popular support. "What difference," said Ebenezer Erskine in the debate, "does a piece of land make between man and man in the affairs of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world? . . . We are told that 'God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith.' It is not said that He 'hath chosen the heritors of this world,' as we have done; but He 'hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.' And if they be heirs of the kingdom, I wish to know by what warrant they are stripped of the privileges of the kingdom."¹

Ebenezer Erskine followed up his protest in the Assembly by a sermon the following autumn before the synod of Perth and Stirling, choosing as his text, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." In the course of his sermon he condemned the action of the Assembly, and said:—

There is a twofold call necessary for a man's meddling as a builder in the Church of God: there is the call of God and of His Church. God's

¹ Thomson's History of the Secession Church, p. 37.

call consists in qualifying a man for His work ; inspiring him with a holy zeal and desire to employ these qualifications for the glory of God and the good of His Church. The call of the Church lies in the free choice and election of the Christian people. . . . Shall we suppose that ever God granted a power to any set of men, patrons, heritors, or whatever they be—a power to impose servants on His family without His consent, they being the freest society in the world? : . . . And seeing the reverend synod has put me in this place, where I am in Christ's stead, I must be allowed to say of this Act what I apprehend Christ Himself would say of it were He personally present where I am—and that is, that by this Act the cornerstone is receded from ; He is rejected in His poor members, and the rich of the world put in their room. If Christ were personally present, where I am by the synod's appointment in His stead, He would say in reference to that Act, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these little ones, ye did it to Me."¹

The synod carried a vote of censure against Ebenezer Erskine, and the sentence was confirmed by the Assembly of the following year, which "appointed him to be rebuked and admonished by the moderator, at their own bar, in order to terminate the process. Mr Erskine declared he could not submit in silence to the rebuke and admonition, as he was not convinced of having done anything that called for censure. He presented a written protest against the sentence, and he craved that it might be read and recorded in the minutes of the Assembly.

Although I have a very great and dutiful regard to the judicatories of this Church, to whom I own my subjection in the Lord ; yet, in respect the Assembly have found me censurable, and have tendered a rebuke and admonition to me, for things I conceive agreeable unto, and founded upon, the Word of God, and our approved standards, I find myself obliged to protest against the said censure, as importing that I have, in my doctrine at the opening of the synod at Perth, October last, departed from the Word of God and the foresaid standards ; and that I shall be at liberty to preach the same truths of God, and to testify against the same or like defections of this Church, upon all proper occasions. And I do hereby adhere unto the testimonies I have formerly emitted against the Act of Assembly 1732,

¹ See Gib's Display, vol. i., Appendix.

whether in the protest entered against it in open Assembly, or yet in my synodical sermon, craving this my protest and declaration to be insert in the records of the Assembly, and that I may be allowed extracts thereof.

May 14, 1733.

EBENEZER ERSKINE.¹

We, underscribing ministers, dissenters from the sentence of the synod of Perth and Stirling, do hereby adhere to the above protestation and declaration, containing a testimony against the Act of Assembly 1732, and asserting our privilege and duty to testify publicly against the same or like defections, upon all proper occasions.

WILLIAM WILSON.

ALEX. MONCRIEFF.

I, Mr James Fisher, minister at Kinclaven, appellant against the sentence of the synod of Perth, in this question, although the Committee of Bills did not think fit to transmit my reasons of appeal, find myself obliged to adhere unto the foresaid protestation and declaration.

JAMES FISHER.²

Thus the four brethren—Ebenezer Erskine of Dunfermline, William Wilson of Perth, Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy, and James Fisher of Kinclaven—protested against the prevailing party in the Church, and defended what they felt to be the rights of conscience. The Assembly regarded the document as a defiance of authority, and summoned the protesters. A committee was appointed to confer with them, but they refused to withdraw their protest or move in any way from the position they had taken up. The Assembly hesitated to take the final step, and appointed a commission with power to suspend them in August if they did not retract their protest and express sorrow for it, and to depose them in November if they did not obey the sentence of suspension. The commission did its appointed work: first suspended them in August; deposed them in November; while the four brethren refusing to acknowledge their authority, met at Gairney Bridge, near Kinross, in December 1733, and seceded from the Church by allying themselves under the name of the Associate Presbytery.

¹ M'Kerrow's History of the Secession Church, p. 52.

² *Uti supra.*

They protested [says the famous John Brown of Haddington] for the validity of their office and continued relation to their congregations, and declared a secession, not from the constitution of the Church of Scotland, but from the prevailing party in her judicatories, ay and until they should return to their duty—because (1) They were breaking down her Presbyterian constitution of Church government,—in trampling on and making decisions contrary to the order prescribed by her barrier laws, enacted in her purest times, for securing due deliberation in forming standing laws and general rules,—in exercising a lordly power over the consciences of Christ's people, empowering heritors and elders to impose on them whatever spiritual guides and pastors they pleased,—in promoting violent intrusions of ministers on reclaiming congregations,—in censuring and ejecting ministers merely for their protesting against a sinful Act of Assembly;—in allowing the commissions to usurp the power of Presbyteries in the settlement of pastors, if they refused to carry on violent intrusions,—and in threatening the highest censures to such as administered the seals of God's covenant to those whose consciences hindered them from submitting to the ministry of intruders. (2) They were pursuing methods evidently intending to corrupt the doctrines contained in their own confession of faith,—in so easily dismissing the process against Professor Simson, and refusing judicially to assert the truth, in opposition to his errors and blasphemies,—in caressing Mr Campbell while he spreads his erroneous tenets,—and in permitting or encouraging preachers to entertain their hearers with dry harangues of almost mere heathen morality instead of the Gospel of Christ. (3) They were imposing on ministers sinful terms of communion, and breach of ordination vows, in requiring them to forbear proper and zealous opposition of the prevalent course of apostasy from the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline of this Church. (4) They continued obstinate in their evil courses, notwithstanding all ordinary means used to reclaim them.¹

Such is a *résumé* of “the Act and Testimony for the Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline and Government of the Church of Scotland,” known as the Judicial Testimony of 1736, which widened the breach between the four brethren and the Church. It is interesting, however, as giving a clear statement of views held by the brethren from the first.

¹ A Compendious History of the Church of Scotland, pp. 362, 363.

The seceding brethren met with a great measure of popular sympathy and support, but it is only just to say that they were very kindly dealt with by their presbyteries, who evidently questioned the delegated authority which the Commission received, and declined to carry out the sentence which had been passed. Unfortunately the Kirk-Session Records of this parish during the period have perished, but the Presbytery Records show that the members of presbytery favoured Mr Wilson of Perth and Mr Moncrieff of Abernethy. As it is only just that in an impartial historical survey such should be known, we give here extracts from the minutes.

August 30, 1733.—The presbytery having again caused read the Commission's letter concerning the two brethren in their bounds—viz., Mr William Wilson and Mr Alexander Moncrieff—who are suspended from the exercise of their ministerial function; and after some reasoning anent supplying the charges of the aforesaid brethren as recommended to them by the Commission. Compeared the said Mr Wilson and Mr Moncrieff, and craved they may be heard, which was granted. And each of them being heard at full length, *vivâ voce*, they both refused to obey the sentence of the Commission, and declared they would continue preaching the Gospel to their congregations in their own pulpits as formerly until they were deferred, in regard they have never been convicted of anything either in doctrine or practice conjurable according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and Constitutions of this Church, and that there is no extract of the Commission's sentence passed against them, sent up to be intimated to their respective congregations. And further declared that if, in consequence of the said pretended suspension passed by the Commission of the late General Assembly, this presbytery shall appoint any minister or probationer to exercise any part of their pastoral work in their respective congregations, they will look upon the same as a violent intrusion upon their ministerial labours. And further, that if any minister or probationer shall obey this unjust and unwarrantable command of the presbytery, he shall be looked upon as an intruder. Then they gave in a prayer, which they called a protestation with an instrument, and craved it may be read and marked; thereafter they removed. . . . Agreed to read the same, which was done accordingly, but did not order that paper to be marked in the minutes. Thereafter the elders of the parish of Abernethy gave in a prayer they called a protestation with an instrument, and craved it might

be marked, which the presbytery refused to do. After discussion a two-fold vote was proposed. . . . (1) It is proposed that the state of the vote be, If or not the Commission have appointed the presbytery to supply the charges of the said brethren? (2) Whether the presbytery will appoint supplies for the brethren's charges, considering their protestation and declaration that they will not yield their pulpits to such supplies until they be compelled. Rolls called; as to the first, carried by a majority the second shall be the state; as to the second question—great plurality for the negative—not appoint supplies for the charges of the foresaid brethren.

Such was the attitude of the presbytery towards the suspension sentence of August 1733, passed by the commission: we will now hear of their position towards the deposition sentence of November.

Perth, November 28, 1733.—The letter was read loosing the relation of the four brethren in the bounds of this synod to their respective charges, and appointing intimation of the said to be made. After discussion the vote being stated, Proceed or delay? it was carried by a great majority, Delay. Therefore the presbytery did and hereby do delay to appoint intimation of the said sentence of the Commission in reference to Mr Wilson and Mr Moncrieff in the bounds of this presbytery till next presbytery day.

At the next presbytery meeting (December 26, 1733) it was carried, *namine contradicente*, in the negative, Not intimate. Therefore the presbytery did and hereby do refuse to intimate the Commission's sentence, passed against Mr William Wilson and Mr Alex. Moncrieff, considering all circumstances of this affair that have been reasoned upon as it now lies before the presbytery.

The presbytery were thus sympathetic towards the brethren, and the Assembly of 1734 was most conciliatory and sought to woo them back. The Acts which were obnoxious to them were repealed, but all in vain. The synod was ordered to restore them to their ministerial functions and privileges, and the presbytery likewise obeyed.

Perth, July 31, 1734.—It having been represented that the synod which met at Stirling the second of this current month did by the power

delegated to them by the late General Assembly take off the sentences pronounced by the Commission of the General Assembly (1733) against the four brethren—to wit, Messrs Ebenezer Erskine, William Wilson, Alexander Moncrieff, and James Fisher,—declaring the same of no force nor effect for the future, unite and restore them to ministerial communion with this Church, to their several charges, and to the exercise of all the parts of their ministerial function, and appointed the said brethren to be enrolled. Then the sentence of the synod was produced and read; and the synod having appointed the same to be inserted in all the presbytery books within the province, the presbytery appointed the same to be inserted accordingly, and likewise the names of the two brethren in their bounds—viz., Mr William Wilson and Mr Alexander Moncrieff—to be presently enrolled.

Mr Meik was appointed by the synod to preach and declare the same from the pulpit of Abernethy.

But the secession had taken place as far as the four brethren were concerned, and although from 1733 to 1740 the Church permitted them to receive their stipends and preach in the parish churches, they continued to protest against the Church. Very unseemly things happened at Dunfermline, where Ralph Erskine was minister, and where the church was, as it still is, a collegiate charge. Mr Erskine would inveigh against the Established Church at the morning service, and his colleague would reply to the charges from the same pulpit at the afternoon service. His brother excommunicated five of his elders in Stirling from the kirk-session because they held different views from himself on the secession. Litigation ensued, and at length Ralph Erskine summoned the five elders by name from the pulpit at Stirling to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ on the day appointed in God's decree.¹ The Judicial Testimony, already referred to, was published in 1736, and the brethren found additional cause for protest in the judgment of the Assembly on Professor Campbell of St Andrews—a judgment which they considered too lenient. They also considered the courts of the Church to be subordinate

¹ The Church of Scotland (Dr Niven), vol. iii. p. 668.

to the civil courts by acquiescing in the proclamation from the pulpit regarding the Porteous riots.

As far as Abernethy is concerned, Mr Moncrieff had evidently the bulk of the people with him, but from 1734 to 1740 he never appeared at a presbytery meeting. The presbytery were now most lenient towards him, and no reference is to be found in the Records about the parish, beyond one, frequently repeated, in which the presbytery desire the session-clerk to produce the Session Records regarding charges which a parishioner complained had been undeservedly made upon him. The request was refused, and at the time of the deposition in 1740 we find that the presbytery are compelled to litigate in the matter. Probably this contention led to the destruction of the parish records during the period: at any rate, they do not now survive.

Mr Moncrieff's answer to the presbytery was as follows:—

Perth, July 27, 1737.—The officer returning reported that Mr Moncrieff gave it as his answer that if the presbytery expected an answer, they need not send their officer; that they meddled with other things in his parish without an answer, and for that they needed not expect an answer in this.

As to Mr Wilson of Perth, the Presbytery Records contain the following complaint:—

July 26, 1737.—Provost Cree declared he was not satisfied with Mr Wilson; that he was offended with his prayers and preaching; that he could not have freedom to hear him if he were not in the public station of provost; that he was grieved to hear the Church of which he was a member so much reflected on; . . . that further, last Sabbath in the forenoon, when there was public preaching in both churches by the other two ministers, he went and preached in a barn on the north side of the town, and that there were persons posted on the ordinary market-day at the ports of the place to acquaint the people. All which representation was adhered to by the elders, deacons, and others present.

Conciliatory measures were not wanting on the part of the

Church, but they were spurned and refused; and it is to the credit of the Church that it tolerated such action for over seven years. The Seceders were immovable, and regarded their position as the measure of all truth: the movement became a popular one, and secession was preferred to restoration. "The region between the Tay and the Forth is the hottest quarter of religious zeal and controversy in Scotland." How needful were the words to be heard, "Little children, love one another."

In 1738 the Church summoned the brethren—now eight in number—to her bar. They appeared, but as the Associate Presbytery, headed by their Moderator; they declined the rule of an "unfaithful Church," and departed. In 1739 they again appeared, but Mr Mair, Moderator of the Associate Presbytery, presented a paper entitled "Act of the Associate Presbytery, finding and declaring that the present judicatories of this National Church are not lawful nor right constitute courts of Christ; and declining all authority, power, and jurisdiction that the said judicatures may claim to themselves over the said presbytery, or any of the members thereof, or over any that are under their inspection; and particularly declining the authority of a General Assembly now met at Edinburgh, the 10th day of May 1739."¹

Only one course was now open, but the Assembly still declined to take it. They tolerated for another year; and in 1740, when reconciliation was hopeless, and appeal was disregarded, the act of separation was pronounced by the Church—an act which the Seceders had taken for themselves seven years previous to 1740. Their churches were declared vacant, and the Principal of St Mary's College, St Andrews, was appointed to discharge the duty at Abernethy. Whatever may be the cause of it we cannot now say, but it seems more than likely that an opportunity of return was still afforded for Mr Moncrieff, as no successor was ordained until 1747—seven years after his deposition.

¹ Annals of the Church of Scotland, 1739 to 1766, p. 7.

The leaders of the first secession from the Church of Scotland [says Principal Tulloch] were really the representatives of principles, partly popular and partly traditionary, which the Church of the Revolution embodied. But then the Church embodied other principles and tendencies as well of a more moderate and flexible character ; and a struggle between the two lines of thought and policy was inevitable. Nothing could have prevented the collision. Whether a higher statesmanship and a more Christian forbearance on both sides might not have averted the catastrophe it is needless now to speculate. But one thing may be said, that the action of the Church in reference to the first Seceders was of a far more generous and conciliatory character than in the case of the subsequent Relief secession twelve years after.¹

From this time forward two rival parties arose in the Church—the Evangelicals and the Moderates—and its subsequent history till the Disruption of 1843 is to a great extent an account of their mutual struggles.

The district between Perth and Stirling [says Sheriff Mackay], and especially the western district of Fife and Kinross, including Abernethy, Dunfermline, Kinross, Portmoak, Orwell, Inverkeithing, Falkland, and Burntisland, has been called the mother-country of the Seceders, though several of the ministers who were their leaders were born in other districts, and the Secession became at a later period more powerful in the west than the east.²

The Secession became a popular movement, especially in the smaller burghs, and in 1765 it claimed 100,000 adherents with 120 churches.³ It may be asked, What were the causes that brought this about?

(1) The Seceders represented the rights of the people, and had the advantage over a Church which had been unwillingly burdened with patronage. Whenever a patron presented a minister who was either unknown or unacceptable to the parish ; whenever the unpopular "Riding Commission" appeared and insisted on the observance of constitutional rights,—the neighbouring Secession

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 272.

² Fife and Kinross, p. 158 ("County Histories").

³ *Ut supra*, p. 165.

or Relief church was felt to be the representative of claims that had been disregarded, and generally received a large accession to its communion-roll. Patronage was associated with tyranny,¹ and the solution of the difficulty presented itself in the near Meeting-house of the Secession. This accelerated their success to an enormous degree, and before long gave much anxiety to the leaders of the Church of Scotland.

(2) The Seceders had much open-air preaching, and this gave them the great power of association in the popular mind. It recalled the days of the Covenanting conventicles, and surrounded the Seceders with a halo of historical romance. The people loved the Covenanters, and delighted in their struggles for religious liberty. The Seceders were felt to be their successors and representatives; their great open-air communions and preachings afforded the historical link that connected them with a loved and venerated movement. Fife, and especially the Lomond district, was aglow with mighty memories, and it is interesting to recall that it was just in that neighbourhood where the Secession took its deepest and earliest hold. In this parish the "preaching knowe" was associated with open-air preaching during the Covenanting period, and it was said to be a favourite place for Mr Moncrieff and his followers to hold their services. The hill called the Meikle Bein, at the south side of the parish, was much resorted to. Says an eyewitness in 1776, "The same spirit that assembled the Covenanters at Loudon Hill draws together the Seceders at this day annually to the Muckle Ben, a hill near Abernethy, generally in June and July, when the labours of the spring are over and those of the harvest have not yet commenced." The inspiring speech on the hillside, with the fervid prayer and the burning psalm, inter-

¹ "Patronage still disturbed the peace of the Establishment and deepened the antagonism between the Moderates and the popular party. In the ten years from 1740 to 1750 there were no fewer than fifty disputed settlements before the Assembly."—History of the Scottish Church, by W. Stephen, vol. ii. p. 523.

preted by mighty associations, and quickened by religious fervour, had a power in rooting the movement within the hearts of the people, and giving it an influence which has proved permanent.

(3) The preaching of the Seceders was heart-stirring and fervid. It was a pleasant contrast to the cold preaching which unfortunately prevailed in many of the parish churches during the period. Historical impartiality demands this to be said, and he is no true apologist for a Church who is blind to its defects. Professor Flint has said :—

It is told of Leighton that when minister of Newbattle he was publicly reprimanded at a meeting of synod for not “preaching up the times,” and that on asking who did so, and being answered, “All the brethren,” he rejoined, “Then if all of you preach up the times, you may surely allow one poor brother to preach up Christ and eternity.” Whether the story itself be true or not, it conveys a great truth. Preaching up Christ and eternity is needed in all times. No teaching which does not, will much profit any time.

The sort of preaching to the times in which Leighton could not join passed away in Scotland, and was succeeded by a very different style of preaching, which he would have disliked still more, inasmuch as it was still more occupied with time and still less with Christ and eternity. It aimed chiefly at being judicious and practical, at promoting refinement and enlightenment, good sense, good conduct, personal happiness, and social contentment; and doubtless it was not altogether unprofitable, but as certainly it failed on the whole even more than the excess from which it was a reaction.¹

Professor Story has said :—

The preacher still thought it fair and right to discuss in the pulpit all questions of public and local interest; but when such discussions no more affected national policy or involved personal danger, the independence which had before been courageous and noble could not represent that character. The pulpit was too often degraded to the uses of personal ill-will, sectarian spite, or professional intolerance; and, for a time at least, forfeited much of its power to edify and elevate the public mind.²

It is historically true to say that the same chilling influence had

¹ Socialism, pp. 476, 477.

² St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 229.

passed over the Church of Scotland which Coleridge described as having passed over the Church of England during the same period :—

Since the Revolution of 1688 our Church has been chilled and starved too generally by preachers and reasoners, Stoic or Epicurean : first, a sort of pagan morality was substituted for righteousness by faith ; and latterly prudence or Paleyism has been substituted for morality. A Christian preacher ought to preach Christ alone, and all things in Him and by Him. If he find a dearth in this, if it seem to him a circumscription, he does not know Christ as the pleroma, the fulness. It is not possible that there should be aught true, or seemly, or beautiful in thought, will, or deed, speculative or practical, which may not, and which ought not, to be evolved out of Christ and the faith in Christ : no folly, no error, no evil to be exposed or warned against which may not and should not be convicted and denounced for its contrariancy and enmity to Christ. To the Christian preacher, Christ should be in all things and all things in Christ ; he should abjure every argument which is not a link in the chain of which Christ is the staple and staple-ring.¹

The personality of these Seceders must seem to impartial students narrow, intolerant, and lacking in the sweet reasonableness that ought to characterise religious faith ; but that they were earnest and sincere according to their perception is open to no manner of doubt. This was felt in their preaching, and found a wide response from the people. Principal Cairns, in the Gairney Bridge celebrations (December 5, 1883), regarded the movement as a reaction against Moderatism, and this was to a very considerable degree the secret of its power. It is always to be deplored that in ecclesiastical upheavals extremes become so prominent. If the Secession fathers had just had more toleration, catholicity, and breadth in their earnestness, it is almost impossible to say what new *vis vivida* would have been added to their position. But their narrowness limited or excluded elements which, broadened and included, might have changed the religious atmosphere far more permeatively. That intolerance,

¹ Notes on English Divines : Donne, vol. i. p. 86.

excessive dogmatism, and even some superstition (*e.g.*, as to witchcraft), characterised them, it is impossible to gainsay; but while we deplore such limitations, we cannot but admire their sincerity. That was the secret of their success, for men in earnest never fail to move and influence. A glimpse into the impression their preaching made upon the people is well illustrated from the following narrative of an eyewitness at Abernethy. It was at the sacramental season in 1735, when the Rev. Ralph Erskine and other "godly" ministers took part; the experience was evidently a representative one, and we give it in the words of the narrator:—

I refrained [he said] from going forward to several tables, till at length I heard Mr Ralph Erskine serve a table, when he spoke to many cases a believer might be in, and to mine among the rest. He showed that in Christ there is a particular thing answering the particular case of every believer, which he showed in every case he mentioned, and declared that it is not sufficient to take Christ wholly to answer our sins wholly, by the lump, but that we must make use of particular things in Christ to answer our particular cases and necessities. I heard these observations with pleasure, and tried to lay them up in my heart, and then I was determined to venture forward to the Lord's Table.

After the tables were served and the communicating work over, Mr Ralph Erskine, without any interval, preached on Psalm cxix. 81, "My soul fainteth for Thy salvation, but I hope in Thy word." I heard some parts of that sermon with satisfaction, but when he was illustrating other parts, I was afraid the ground of the hypocrite's hope was mine, so that I was very unsteady. When the work was concluded about twelve o'clock, and I had got supper, I felt indisposed in the time of private worship. Though I struggled against it, yet drowsiness prevailed.

Monday, 23rd June.—Having risen from private worship, I went out to the yards [gardens] of Abernethy on the north side of the town, to secret worship, about two in the morning, where I marvelled to hear the whole town ringing like a hive of bees with prayer—the like I had never before heard, but my heart was lifted up with it. The people were so numerous that I could scarcely find a place, even although it was raining. I lay down, however, at the side of growing lint, and I really had in my own apprehension some liberty and freedom.¹

¹ Life of Ralph Erskine, by J. L. Watson, pp. 36, 37.

Another point on which the Seceding brethren differed from the Church of Scotland was the renewing of the Covenants. The Church held that the legitimate objects for which they had contended were realised in the Revolution Settlement, and that to renew them was no longer necessary nor expedient; that while they were wrapt up in the struggles for liberty, they yet contained much which in the new circumstances was unjust and unattainable; that the truth they expressed was now embodied fact. The Seceders held it as a firm conviction that such was a defection on the part of the Church, and that all should be subject to the Covenants. The Church was right in the matter, and the Associate Presbytery cannot but be blamed for asserting as necessary what was only historical and contingent. Well has Professor Flint said: "If the course of divine Providence, as traceable in the history of the last two hundred years, affords any indication of the divine will, *that* was not the divine will. To have imposed these Covenants on the nation at the Revolution, or at any period since the Revolution, could manifestly have only led to wrongs and cruelties as great as were those against which the Covenanters protested and struggled."¹

The position of the Seceders with regard to the Covenants was thus stated in the words of their Judicial Testimony: "Nor has the obligation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, with their binding force upon posterity, ever been expressly asserted by any particular Act of Assembly since the Revolution, nor has the Solemn League and Covenant been expressly named in any of the grounds of national fasting since that time."²

Their firm adherence to the Covenants led them to exclude George Whitefield from their pulpits. At a conference which the Seceders had with the great preacher when he came to Scotland, it was contended that one form of Church government was divine.

¹ St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 221.

² Hill Burton's History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 332.

Whitefield, laying his hand on his heart, said, "I do not find it here." Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy replied, as he rapped the Bible that lay on the table, "But I find it here."¹

Whitefield separated from the Associate Presbytery when they desired that he should preach only in connection with them and sign the Solemn League and Covenant. The story of the rupture can best be told in his own words, as three days after the interview he wrote an account of it to his friend, Noble of New York :—

EDINBURGH, Aug. 8, 1741.

MY DEAR BROTHER,— . . . The Associate Presbytery here are so confined that they will not so much as hear me preach unless I will join with them. Mr Ralph Erskine, indeed, did hear me, coming up with me into the pulpit of the Canongate church, but I believe it gave offence to his associates. I met most of them according to appointment on Wednesday last. A set of grave, venerable men! They soon proposed to form themselves into a presbytery, and were proceeding to choose a moderator. I asked them for what purpose? They answered to discourse and set me right about the matter of Church government and the National League and Covenant. I replied they might save themselves that trouble, for I had no scruple about it, and that settling Church government and preaching about the Solemn League and Covenant was not my plan. I then told them something of my experience, and how I was led out into my present way of work. One in particular said he was deeply affected, and the dear Mr Erskine desired they would have patience with me, for that having been born and bred in England and never studied the point, I could not be supposed to be so perfectly acquainted with the nature of their Covenants. One much warmer than the rest² immediately replied, "That no indulgence was to be shown me; that England had revolted most with respect to covenant government; and that I, born and educated there, could not but be acquainted with the matter now in debate." I told them I had never yet made the Solemn League and Covenant the object of my study, being too busy about matters, as I judged, of greatest importance. Several replied that every pin of the tabernacle was precious. I said that in every building there were outside and inside workmen; that the latter at

¹ Life and Travels of George Whitefield, by James Paterson Gledstone, p. 261; also Tyerman's Life, 2 vols.

² Evidently Mr Moncrieff.

present was my province ; that if they felt themselves called to the former, they might proceed in their own way and I would proceed in mine. I then asked them seriously what they would have me do ; the answer was that I was not desired to subscribe immediately to the Solemn League and Covenant, but to preach only for them until I had further light. I asked, why only for them? Mr Ralph Erskine said, "They were the Lord's people." I then asked whether there were no other Lord's people but themselves, and supposing all other were the devil's people, they had more need to be preached to, and therefore I was more determined to go out into the highways and hedges ; and that if the Pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim the righteousness of Jesus Christ therein.

Soon after this the company broke up ; and one of these other venerable men immediately went into the meeting-house and preached upon the words, "Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night : if ye will enquire, enquire ye : return, come." I attended, but the good man so spent himself in talking against Prelacy, the Common Prayer Book, the surplice, the rose in the hat, and suchlike externals, that when he came to the latter part of his text to invite poor sinners to Jesus Christ his breath was so gone that he could scarce be heard. What a pity that the last was not first, and the first last ! The consequence of all this was an open breach. I retired, I wept, I prayed, and after preaching in the fields sat down and dined with them and then took a final leave. At table a gentlewoman said she had heard I had told some people that the Associate Presbytery were building a Babel. I said, "Madam, it is quite true ; and I believe the Babel will soon fall down about their ears" ; but enough of this. Lord, what is man, what the best of men but men at the best ! . . . —
Ever yours in our common Lord,

G. WHITEFIELD.¹

While the Associate Presbytery thus treated Whitefield, it is only historically true and just to say that many pulpits in the Established Church were open to him. The Moderates were distinguished for their literary activity, their toleration, their beneficent work ; and it is a historical fact, open to no manner of dispute, that it was in the Church, where their influence was paramount, that Whitefield received his warmest welcome. Dr Webster of Edinburgh took part in the great Cambuslang Revival, and while both

¹ Gledstone's *Life and Travels of Whitefield*.

Seceders and Cameronians denounced it as the work of Satan in an extraordinary document, marked by one-sidedness and intolerance,¹ Dr Webster vindicated the work with calmness and charity. "His words," says the biographer of Whitefield, "after those of the Cameronian and Associate Presbytery, were like summer breezes after an east wind."²

Audi alteram partem is always a just way of procedure, and while we recognise the good that made the Associate Presbytery strong, it is no less honourable to recognise the noble elements in the Church from which they seceded and against which they protested. In both cases, as in all human institutions and movements, much good existed side by side with incompleteness. If we can say with the Rev. Principal Rainy of the Free Church College, Edinburgh:—

What drew the people to them [the Seceders], and multiplied their congregations with such rapidity, was not the mere series of points on which they stated their division; it was not even the protest against patronage, though that went home to the Scottish heart. It was the authentic declaration of the Gospel, preached broadly and directly, and felt to be the power of God unto salvation. The right which the United Presbyterians have to claim their part in the representation of the Scottish Church goes deeper far than the assertion of a few ecclesiastical points and traditions. They stood for Truth and Life in days when the battle went sore against both. And as long as Truth and Life are maintained in Scotland, it will not be forgotten that a great share of the honour of having carried them safe through some of our darkest days was given by God to the Seceders.³

If we say also with the late Rev. Principal Cairns of the United Presbyterian Church:—

Unlike the Nonconformists of England, the Seceders only protested against the administration of the Church and not against its doctrine or polity. . . . This movement [Secession] was not the result of a mere

¹ See Hill Burton under date.

² Life and Travels, by Gledstone, p. 295.

³ Three Lectures on the Church of Scotland, by Robert Rainy, D.D., p. 75.

technical controversy between the ruling party in the National Church and the Seceders, but was a reaction of the religious life of Scotland against hostile elements, and was thus similar in a wide sense to the Wesleyan revival in England and to the German pietism of the eighteenth century.¹

It is also right to recognise the discriminating judgment of the late Rev. Principal Tulloch:—

There was a lack of open vision in the Church of Scotland during the eighteenth century. She failed to realise the greatness of her mission as a National Church. She failed to witness as she ought to have done to the living love of a divine Saviour. But her spiritual coldness was a feature of the age to which she belonged: no Church was quite exempt from it. And with all her deficiencies, she has claims upon our gratitude and respect. If wanting in zeal, she grew in toleration. If disliking enthusiasms, she cultivated literature. If she had little church life, she prized freedom and good sense, and wrought no new bonds for the Christian conscience. If her clergy were not adequately inspired by self-denying devotion in dealing with the human soul and reclaiming spiritual wastes, they presented examples of moderation and thoughtfulness and Christian charity. And Scotland would have been a poorer country in many ways if many of the Moderate clergy had not lived to advance its fame and illustrate the Church to which they belonged.²

Having now sketched the origin and development of the Associate Presbytery and the secession from the Church of Scotland which it represented, we shall now give a short biography of Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie, narrating at the same time some details about the Secession Church which he originated at Abernethy.

His grandfather was the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff, minister at Scoonie, who suffered imprisonment and banishment during the reign of Charles II. for attachment and constancy to his principles.³ His father was Matthew, eldest son of the minister of Scoonie.

¹ Memoir of John Brown, D.D., p. 6 *et seq.*

² St Giles' Lectures, First Series, p. 288.

³ See Seton's 'House of Moncrieff,' p. 84 *et seq.*

Matthew Moncrieff succeeded his uncle John in the estate of Culfargie at Abernethy, and continued the representation of the Kintillo family.¹ Alexander Moncrieff was born at Culfargie in July 1695, and in character very much resembled his grandfather. Like him, also, he took an important part in the ecclesiastical affairs of the period.

He studied at the grammar-school of Perth, and at the University of St Andrews, where he graduated in 1714. He attended the Divinity Hall at St Mary's College for at least two sessions, and continued his theological studies at the University of Leyden, Holland, attending the lectures of the famous John à Marck and Wesselius.² His name is still to be seen on the lists of those who attended the University, and Professor Marck's certificate speaks of him in the highest terms. It refers to "the sharpness of his intellect, the agility of his judgment, the force of his memory, the warmth of his eloquence, the ardour of his learning, the solidity of his doctrine, his love of orthodoxy, the zeal of his piety."³

As he lost his father by death when he was but thirteen years of age, his education was superintended by his mother—who was a remarkable and pious lady—and by his uncle and curator, David Moncrieff of Rhynd, to whom he expressed much gratitude on attaining his majority. Dr Young, his biographer, emphasises the influence of heredity in Mr Moncrieff's life and work, while he believed that the personality of his grandfather had no small power in moulding the character of the grandson:—

"Spirits seem buried, and their epitaph
Is writ in Latin by severest pens,
Yet still they flit above the trodden grave
And find new bodies, animating them
In quaint and ghostly way with antique souls."

His character was of an earnest, thoughtful, serious type, that

¹ House of Moncrieff, p. 93.

² *Ibid.*, p. 101.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

came under early religious impressions. At the age of seventeen he wrote a document entitled "A Covenant with God," which he renewed at subsequent dates by definite acts of adherence. It gives an insight into the current of young Culfargie's mind, and the following extract is not without much interest:—

Finally, I do disclaim all confidence in myself, as to the performance of this Covenant, knowing the inconstancy and unfaithfulness of my heart, how apt it is to turn aside like a deceitful bow; and therefore I lay the whole weight and stress of it upon Him who works both to will and to do of His good pleasure; humbly beseeching Him, through Jesus Christ, graciously to accept of this offer, and mercifully to pardon my sinful weakness and infirmities, and favourably grant His necessary assistance that I may go on in the strength of the Lord, making mention of His righteousness, even of His only.—In witness of the premisses, I do subscribe the same with my hand as follows:

ALEXANDER MONCRIEFF.

At Culfargie, 11th day of July 1712, afternoon, towards or near night.

He did not enter upon the work of the ministry thoughtlessly, and extracts have already been given from the Presbytery Records which are interesting in so far as they reveal a spiritual struggle that beset him during the period prior to his trials for licence. There is a surviving paper which also indicates this, and it reveals a mind burdened with a sense of the responsibilities attaching to future work:—

It is a very weighty matter to be a minister. I can, through divine aid, venture my own soul: since God hath made it, I shall serve Him with it; and I may be severely punished if I refuse, when called to be a minister, because of the difficulty or danger of the work. But shall I risk other people's souls? If God in mercy do not prevent it, I may be instrumental in damning instead of saving them. If I be a minister, I should have skill of my business, as every man of his trade. I should thoroughly know the disease of sin, and the remedy, Christ. If I know not my business, I should not meddle with it.¹

The extracts already given from the Presbytery Records (pp. 405-

¹ History of the Secession Church, p. 827.

408) bear likewise evidence of a long spiritual struggle, and reveal a mind singularly earnest. In 1719 he was licensed as a preacher of the Gospel by the presbytery of Perth, and on September 14, 1720, he was ordained minister of Abernethy—sixty-one heritors and thirteen elders having signed the call. The bulk of the parishioners also acquiesced.

His ordination sermon was preached by his uncle, the Rev. William Moncrieff of Methven, who offended some relatives of the young minister by warning him against the danger of his territorial position in the parish lessening his spiritual influence as a clergyman. The young minister, however, took it kindly, and thanked his uncle at the close of the service for the advice, which he accepted and commended.

Two years after his ordination he married Miss Mary Clerk, daughter of Sir John Clerk of Pennycuick: the lady died a few years afterwards, leaving one son, who succeeded his father as Secession minister at Abernethy.

The "Marrow Controversy" was strong in the district at the time immediately after his ordination, and Mr Moncrieff was said to have been generally sympathetic towards those who were known as the "Marrow men." In 1732 he sided with the Rev. Ralph Erskine, and in 1733, along with the other three brethren, was first suspended by the commission in August and deposed in November; but the presbytery of Perth refused to carry out either sentence. Along with his brethren he met at Gairney Bridge on December 1733 and formed what was known as the Associate Presbytery. The General Assembly of 1734 reponed him in office, and from 1734 to 1740 he preached from the parish church pulpit, occupied the parish manse, received the stipend, yet protested against the judicatories of the Church, declined to attend presbytery meetings, or in any way to be amenable to ecclesiastical authority. No course was open but one, and after tolerating this attitude for the period already

mentioned, the Assembly deposed him in 1740.¹ It is said that when Principal Campbell of St Andrews, who was appointed to declare the sentence from the pulpit at Abernethy, came to the church he could not get entrance on account of the opposition he met from Mr Moncrieff's parishioners. He applied to the sheriff-substitute of the county to support him in the discharge of his duty, but the sheriff is said to have declined to interfere.²

During the period from 1733 to 1740 Mr Moncrieff was frequently assisted in his pulpit and at the communions by the Rev. Ralph Erskine and the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine. In the Diary of the former is found the following: "July 16, 1738, being Sabbath, I was at Abernethy sacrament, when I preached Sabbath and Tuesday, and served eight tables, being greatly assisted, especially at the last. My text at this occasion was Heb. iv. 3, 'We that have believed do enter into rest.'"³ Throughout the three volumes of published sermons, on the other hand, by the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, will be found discourses delivered on similar occasions at Abernethy.

An interesting glimpse of Mr Moncrieff's character is given in the words of Mr Wilson of Perth, who described him as having "the face of a lion."⁴ The "lion," not the "dove," was the symbol of the movement.

Unfortunately the intolerance of the Seceders left not only, as Hill Burton says, a prominent mark for the scorner, but excluded—in fact, excommunicated—personalities that would have shed a lustre around the movement had they been recognised. Whitefield gave Wesley his impression of the Scots, and especially of the

¹ Mr Seton states, "Mr Moncrieff appears to have had considerable misgivings as to the propriety of the schism."—House of Moncrieff, p. 106.

² M'Kerrow's History of the Secession, p. 828.

³ Life and Diary of Rev. Ralph Erskine, A.M., by Donald Fraser, p. 251.

⁴ Life and Diary of Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, A.M., of Stirling, by Donald Fraser, p. 536.

Seceders.¹ "I have not yet," he said, "met a Papist who would tell me to my face that all but themselves must be damned; but I have seen Seceders enough who make no scruple to affirm that none but themselves could be saved."²

If the earnestness of these early Seceders took a narrow form, it was nevertheless strong, as the subsequent account will show. As to Mr Moncrieff's immediate action after deposition, accounts somewhat differ. Dr M'Kerrow says:—

He acted a very dignified and disinterested part after sentence of deposition was pronounced upon him by the Assembly of 1740. Though no attempt was made to exclude him by violence from the parish church which he had hitherto occupied, he refused to enter it, and continued preaching in the open air till a new place of worship was erected for him by his people. During the remaining period of his ministry among them he refused to receive from them any emolument in the name of stipend; though, on account of their number and respectability, they would neither have felt it to be a burden, nor regarded it as a hardship, to allow him an adequate maintenance. The ample patrimony which he possessed rendered him independent in his worldly circumstances. Entitled, however, as he was by the law of Christ to support from those among whom he laboured, his disinterestedness in labouring gratuitously among his people was not on that account the less conspicuous or praiseworthy.³

¹ It is interesting to compare with this John Wesley's references to Scotland:—

"*May 12, 1774.*—I went in the stage-coach to Glasgow, and on Friday and Saturday preached on the old Green to a people, the greatest part of whom hear much, know everything, and feel nothing.

"*Friday, 20.*—I rode over to Mr Fraser's at Monedie, whose mother-in-law was to be buried that day. O what a difference is there between the English and the Scotch method of burial! The English does honour to human nature; and even to the poor remains that were once a temple of the Holy Ghost! But when I see in Scotland a coffin put into the earth, and covered up without a word spoken, it reminds me of what was spoken concerning Jehoiakim, 'He shall be buried with the burial of an ass!'

"*Saturday, 21.*—I returned to Perth and preached in the evening to a large congregation. But I could not find the way to their hearts. The generality of the people here are so wise that they need no more knowledge, and so good that they need no more religion. Who can warn them that are brimful of wisdom and goodness to flee from the wrath to come?"—Diary of John Wesley, vol. iv. pp. 13, 14.

² History of the Scottish Church, by W. Stephen, vol. ii. p. 523.

³ History of the Secession, p. 829.

Mr Seton says :—

For a time he continued to officiate in the parish church as heretofore, from which the secular authorities showed no particular haste to eject him. Driven at last, however, from the church, he preached in the adjoining churchyard, under the shadow of the venerable Pictish tower, until a meeting-house was erected for the use of the congregation.

In a note he adds :—

The date of erection—1743—appears on what formed the keystone of the meeting-house, now built into the south gable of the new United Presbyterian church of Abernethy, at the entrance to which is a sculptured head of Alexander Moncrieff. The meeting-house was demolished in 1866.¹

In 1742, or nine years after the Secession took place, Mr Moncrieff was appointed Professor of Divinity by the Associate Presbytery of Perth and Dunfermline, in succession to Mr Wilson of Perth. He had for a text-book the *Medulla* of Marck, his former professor at Leyden, and it was probably at Mr Moncrieff's suggestion that a class for instruction in philosophy was begun.² Fortunately we have the testimony of two eyewitnesses regarding this period, and we give their impressions, which cannot be called prejudiced. Bishop Pococke of Meath visited the parish in 1760, and wrote on August 29th of the same year in his letter about Abernethy :—

One of the name of Moncrieff was some years ago minister here, deprived on account of his doctrine, Heterodox Tenets, and became with four more the Heads of the Seceders : he lives at a Village to the North near the river, and has formed a sort of university for educating young men for their congregation. I was told there were about twenty who boarded here and at that Village with the farmers, for two shillings a-week, and attend his lectures. It is a very poor Village at present : there is a Seceding meeting-house here.³

¹ House of Moncrieff, p. 107.

² United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, by Rev. P. Landreth, p. 82.

³ Pococke's *Tours in Scotland* (Scot. History Society Series), p. 262.

In the Rev. James Hall's 'Travels in Scotland by an Unusual Route' we find the following reference to the Abernethy Divinity Hall:—

In the new Kirk of Abernethy, or the vestry, called the Session House, lectures in theology were given three or four times a-week to the students, during the session, by Mr Moncrieff, and Mr Wilson of Perth, who were appointed professors of divinity by the Associated Synod. There was also, at what was now called the College of Abernethy, a professor of philosophy—that is, of logic and metaphysics. The students of philosophy were not taught in the church, but in the house of the professor. They lodged with the burghers of Abernethy, or with the farmers in the neighbourhood.

It was not the business or object of the professor of philosophy to point out the legitimate mode of philosophical investigation, and trace the progress of science, but only to skim over some systems then in vogue, of dialectics, ontology, and pneumatology. The great object was, to prevent the minds of the students from being seduced into any speculations that might ultimately tend to lessen their reverence for the covenant. Mr Moncrieff generously administered to the wants of the students when they stood in need, as they often did, of his assistance. In his declining years they sometimes received the benefit of his instructions, not in the new church at Abernethy, but in his own house, at Culfargie. They also attended, sometimes, on Mr Wilson, at his house in Perth, about seven miles distant. On the death of Mr Alexander Moncrieff, though he was succeeded by his son, Mr Matthew Moncrieff, in his clerical function among the Seceders, the Divinity College was translated from Abernethy to Alloa, where it was conducted by Mr William Moncrieff, a younger brother of Matthew's, and esteemed not only a more profound scholar, but a more zealous abettor of the covenant; yet, for many years thereafter, the philosophy of the Seceders continued to be taught at Abernethy. One of the professors, a Mr Pirie, though he had attained no other education than what he got among the Seceders, being naturally intelligent and acute, attained to not a little notice in Scotland by a printed controversy, which he carried on with Lord Kames, about liberty and necessity. The great text-book for philosophy, at the College of Abernethy, was Locke's 'Essay on Human Understanding.'¹

In vol. vi. of the 'Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works of the Rev. Alexander Pirie, Minister of the Gospel, Newburgh, Fife,' will be found "Part of a Course of Lectures on Moral Philosophy,

¹ Vol. i. pp. 207, 208.

delivered by Mr Pirie to a class of Divinity Students, under his charge, while residing at Abernethy." Two of the young men who were members of the Secession congregation at Abernethy, and were educated at the Secession Divinity and Philosophical classes, were subsequently chosen to be its pastors—Matthew Moncrieff and David Lawrie.¹

Having stated something about the Abernethy Divinity Hall, primitive as it was, we shall now endeavour to form some idea of the great Secession congregation which was formed under Mr Moncrieff's influence. The great bulk of his former elders and people seem to have joined him in the Secession, and for a time at least the parish church appears to have been hopelessly weakened.

Permission has been given me to examine the original papers in connection with Mr Moncrieff's congregation, and what impresses one most about them is their unquestionable earnestness from the Seceder's point of view. The first important step the minister took after his new church was built was the "Renovation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, in the Bond adapted to our present situation and circumstances in this period by the Associate Presbytery." After repeating the Covenants, the Bond, solemnly subscribed by the congregation on June 28, 1744, was as follows:—

We, all and every one of us, though sensible of the Deceitfulness and Unbelief of our own Hearts, and however frequently perplexed with Doubts and Fears anent our actual Believing; yet, desiring to essay in the Lord's Strength, and in obedience to his Command, to glorify God, by believing His Word of Grace contained in his Covenant of Promise, and in the Faith of his Promise, to devote ourselves unto the Lord in a Covenant of Duty: We do, with our Hands lifted up to the Most High God, hereby profess, and, before God, Angels, and Men, solemnly declare, That, through the Grace of God, and according to the Measure of his Grace given unto us, we do, with our whole Hearts, take hold of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Propitiation for our Sins: his Righteousness as the only Founda-

¹ United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, by Rev. P. Landreth, p. 96.

tion of our Access to and Acceptance with God : his Covenant of free and rich Promises, as our only charter for the heavenly Inheritance : his Word for our perfect and only Rule of Faith and Practice : his Spirit for our only Guide, to lead us into all Truth revealed in his Holy Word, unto which nothing, at any Time, is to be added, whether by new Revelations of the Spirit or Traditions of Men. We avouch the Lord to be our God, and, in the Strength of his promised Grace, we promise and swear, by the Great Name of The Lord Our God, That we shall walk in his Way, keep his Judgments and Commandments, and hearken to his Voice : And, particularly, that we shall, by the Lord's Grace, continue and abide in the Profession, Faith, and Obedience of the foresaid true reformed Religion, in Doctrine, Worship, Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline ; and that we shall, according to our several Stations, Places and Callings, contend and testify against all contrary Evils, Errors and Corruptions, particularly, Popery, Prelacy, Deism, Arianism, Arminianism, and every Error subversive to the Doctrine of Grace ; as also Independency, Latitudinarian Tenets, and the other Evils named in the above Confession of Sins.

In like Manner, we promise and swear, That, by all Means which are lawful and warrantable for us, according to the Word of God, the approved and received Standards of this Church, and our known Principles, we shall, in our several Stations and Callings, endeavour the Reformation of Religion in England and Ireland, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, according to the Word of God : and to promote and advance our covenanted Conjunction and Uniformity in Religion, Confession of Faith and Catechisms, Form of Church Government, and Directory for Worship, as these were received by this Church.

And, in regard we are taught by the Word of God, and bound by our Covenants, National and Solemn League, to live together in the Fear of God, and in Love one to another, and to encourage one another in the Work and Cause of the Lord ; and that, denying all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World : Therefore, in a Dependence on the Lord's Grace and Strength, We, in the same Manner, do promise and swear that we shall, in our several Places and Callings, encourage and strengthen one another's Hands, in pursuing our End and Design of this our Solemn Oath and Covenant ; and that we shall endeavour a Life and Conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ : And that, in our personal Callings and particular Families, we shall study to be good Examples to one another of Godliness and Righteousness, and of every Duty that we owe to God and Man ; and that we shall not give up ourselves to a detestable Indifference, and Neutrality in the Cause of God : but, denying ourselves, and our own Things, we shall, above all

Things, seek the Honour of God, and the Good of his Cause and People; and that, through Grace, forsaking the Counsels of Flesh and Blood, and not leaning upon Carnal Confidences, we shall endeavour to depend upon the Lord, to walk by the Rule of his Word, and to hearken to his Voice by his Servants. In all which, professing our own weakness, we earnestly pray to God, who is the Father of Mercies, through his Son Jesus Christ, to be merciful unto us, and to enable us, by the Power of his Holy Spirit, that we may do our Duty, unto the Praises of his Grace in the Churches.

At Abernethy, June 29th, 1744, We the Elders of the Session of Abernethy and the Elders of the Associate Session meeting at Abernethy and others the inhabitants of the said parish of Abernethy and members of the Community belonging thereto, having yesterday the twentieth current sworn the above Bond and Engagement to Dutie drawn up by the Associate Presbytery as the Renovation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League in Accommodation to the present times, do with our hands subscribe the same Date and place above written In presence of the Congregation of Abernethy and of Mr Andrew Arrat, Minister of the Gospel at Dunichen, and Mr Alex^r. Moncreef, Min^r. of the Gospel at Abernethy, and Mr Thomas Mair, Min^r. of the Gospel at Orwel, and Mr George Brown, Min^r. of the Gospel in the Associate Congregation at Perth, and Mr W^m. Campble, Min^r. of the Gospel in the Associate Congregation at Ceres.

The original document has annexed to it the signatures of the people, and there are in all 13 elders, 6 divinity students, 97 members who sign their names, and 1 elder with 132 people who, being unable to write, requested the session-clerk to annex their names for them. It is a most interesting document, and one cannot look at the signatures without feeling the emotion that still seems to throb in them. They bring back the earlier days of the Covenants, when historical conditions made them so real.

The theological position of the seceding clergy, in which they were followed by their people, may be accurately described as that of Evangelical Calvinists, and on Church polity they were so dogmatic as to assert the necessity of England and Ireland adopting the same Presbyterian platform as themselves. No quarter is given even to Whitefield, and we find Mr Moncrieff, in a volume of sermons published in 1747, and containing the reports of those delivered in

July 1744 at Abernethy during the renovation of the Covenants, thus referring to him:—

The kind reception Mr Whitefield got from many, both of the Ministers and People of this Church, or any Entertainment his doctrine got, was a Denial of any particular Form of Church Government to be of divine Institution. But, if this be considered a little, it will come out to be no Falsehood, but a certain Truth, that these Ministers and People, who entertained, heard and encouraged Mr Whitefield, after he had declared against Presbyterian Church Government, and pretended it is a Matter of no Moment, whether the Government be Prelatical or Presbyterian or Congregational, providing Men hold by the Essentials of Religion, as they call it: I say, it must be a certain Truth that those who encouraged Mr Whitefield, after he had declared against the divine Right of Presbyterian Church Government, did practically deny that Presbyterian Government is of divine institution; for they must in the Nature of the Thing either be reputed, in their Principles, to have given up with Presbyterian Government's being of Divine Institution, or to have taken it upon themselves, poor sinful Mortals, to make free with God's Institutions, and to have boldly adventured to assist a strolling Priest of the Church of England to pull down what Christ has built by his own Authority in his Eternal Word: let them chuse which of the two they will.¹

The important aspect of the movement was that to a great extent it was a revival of religion, and there seems to have been some connection between it and the similar revival under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards in America. We know that Edwards and the Erskines were regular correspondents, but how far they affected each other it is impossible now to say. The first revival at Northampton was in 1475; the Great Awakening in 1749; while Edwards' biographer states:—

To Edwards belongs the credit of initiating a movement which, beginning at Northampton, was to spread over New England and through the Colonies in America—which was to penetrate into Scotland and England, stimulating and giving form to ideas which were already fermenting in the mind of Wesley. . . . The impulse of the Great Awakening was a theological conviction which first took shape in Edwards' mind

¹ Sermons, pp. 126, 127.

—a belief in the immediate action of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul. . . . God was then seen to be holding as direct and immediate a relationship to the soul as he held to the external world. This principle became the foundation of Edwards' doctrine of Conversion. . . . The idea of revivals is the gift of America to foreign Calvinism.¹

In 1740 Jonathan Edwards drew up a Covenant which his people at Northampton subscribed. It has one distinguishing difference from the Scottish one; it does not refer to the National and Solemn League Covenants—these were Scottish; it does not refer to questions of Church government, but it refers to the service that the Christian is called to render in the world and the duties of Christian consecration.² It is impossible now to trace definitely the connection between the two. Edwards may have suggested the Bond to the Erskines, or the Erskines may have suggested it to Edwards: be this as it may, the Bond was a characteristic of both movements, and both were evidently the expression of the same idea, although the Secession one was more coloured by Scottish conditions.

The Bond was frequently renewed at Abernethy Secession church, and the members were gathered from far and near. We find them in the documents as coming from Auchtermuchty, Collessie, Abdie, Arngask, Strathmiglo, Bridge of Earn, Forgan-denny; Dr M'Kerrow in his book adds St Andrews. The list is interesting in so far as it shows how widespread the movement was in this district, and what a revived interest in religion seemed to accompany it. While the Session Records give the list of those subscribing the Bond, they are also careful to give "the names of those who have not entered into the Bond, but are yet for taking it into consideration in the way of laying it before the Lord for Light in the matter."

¹ Life of Jonathan Edwards, by Professor Allen, D.D., of Cambridge, Mass., pp. 134-136.

² See Dwight's 'Life of Edwards,' pp. 166-168.

Mr Moncrieff sided with the house of Hanover during the Rebellion of 1745, and prayed publicly in the hearing of the rebels for King George. He declined to pay the "cess" which was exacted in favour of the Stuart cause—Strathearn being one of the strongest haunts of Jacobitism—and as a result of the refusal his cattle and furniture were seized and his eldest son carried away to prison in Perth. He also felt it his duty to prevent his congregation from giving the rebels any countenance; and two members of his congregation being found guilty by the session of compliance with them, were subjected to ecclesiastical censure.

As Mr Moncrieff and his congregation had taken the final step of separation from the Church of Scotland, no other alternative was possible to the heritors but to exclude them from the church which they had been allowed to use during the seven previous years of protest unquestioned (from 1733 to 1740). They still met in the churchyard, but surely it was not unreasonable that, after permitting this for six years after the deposition of 1740, the heritors should at last prevent access to the churchyard. It speaks well for the kindness and toleration of the Church of Scotland that it declined to interfere for so long; and ultimately no other thing could possibly be done than assert its right to the church and refuse access to the churchyard, during the hours of public worship, to a congregation which was out of sympathy with, and opposed to, the ruling of its courts. The Church that represents to-day the Secession Church of 1740 could only have acted likewise under similar circumstances, and the interpretation Mr Moncrieff put upon it cannot but be regarded as unreasonable:—

July 6th, Abernethy, 1746.—Session being met and constituted by prayer, were present all the Elders and Deacons and Moderator. The minister acquainted the Session that he is well informed that the Heritors and others who have hitherto opposed the work of God and the cause of Christ in this congregation, have now come that length not only to lock

and nail up the church-doors which they did long ago, but that they have now nailed up and locked up the doors of the churchyard: Likewise, although he advertised the Congregation to meet there this day as the place of worship belonging to this congregation, yet he can have no access for himself or the people, but upon condition that the keys be delivered back to the heritors and those in this congregation when they call for them who have conspired with the Presbytery of Perth and other judicatures of the Established Church to oppose the work of God and the cause of Christ in this place, and to make an intrusion upon his labours in the Work of the Gospel. The Session taking this affair under consideration agreed that their offering the keys upon this condition was the same conspiracy against the Gospel of Christ as if they had absolutely refused them; after the Session had come to this sentence and resolution, the minister read the following protest in presence of the Session:—

*“At Abernethy, July 6, 1746.—I, Alexander Moncrief, Minister of the Gospel at Abernethy, having adhered to my people through Divine Grace in the midst of all the opposition I have met with, particularly by the pretended Presbytery of Perth, their intruding upon my charge and Heritours and others in this paroch, shutting the Church Doors and otherwise and having after all this maintained my right to the publick place of worship by preaching upon proper occasions in the churchyard and having advertised my people to meet this Day for the worship of God in the churchyard and now that I and the Elders and Deacons with my people stand at the Doors of the churchyard and find them locked and nailed up and that we cannot have access to worship God in this place for worship which belongs to me and the people of my congregation, Therefore I PROTEST before God Angels and men that as I shall desire to adhere so I have kept the publick place of worship belonging to me and the people of my congregation untill that I am violently reverst out from it, . . . and I protest that I and the Session of this place and the great bodie of the people of this congregation who adhere to My Ministry are free from all the bad consequences of this Violence used against the work of God and the Interest of Christ and of the Intrusion made or yet may be made upon my Labours in the work of the Gospel, and that they shall be charged upon the Heritours and others in this place who have promoted this Course of Apostacy from the Lord and have Conspired with the pretended Presbytery of Perth in making this intrusion upon the work of the Lord in my hands, and I crave this my Protest may be marked in the minutes of Session for my Exoneration and thereupon I take Instruments in the hands of the Session Clerk.—*Sic subscribitur**

ALEX^R. MONCRIEF.”

The Session agreed this protest be read at the Door of the churchyard, and the min^r Elders and Deacons having accompanied the min^r to the Door of the Churchyard, the minister read this protest in presence of the Session and people present. And the min^r and Session having returned to the place of meeting, the Session closed with prayer.

After the ordination of the Rev. Andrew Gray as the parish minister on 16th June 1747, litigation was begun in connection with the church communion plate, which Mr Moncrieff had taken with him to the Secession church. The Sheriff of Perth decided that the utensils belonged to the parish church and could not be removed; Mr Moncrieff still asserted his claim over them, and the following is his protest as recorded in the minutes of his church:—

At Colfargie, February 25, 1748.—The Session being met and constitute with prayer by Mr Alex^r Moncreff, Mod^r, Sed^t David Small and Elders. The protestation agreed upon to be drawn up by the Minister was read a first and second time and approved of to be entered upon the Exhibiting of the particulars Libelled, which are now appointed by the Sheriff of Perth to be given up upon the fourth of March next, and they agree that the members of Session named in the said Draught enter this protestation at the Exhibiting of the particulars libeled, and they agree that the said protestation and Indentur be entered into and recorded in the minutes. The tenor of which follows:—

A Protestation by the Kirk-Session of Abernethy, under which the Church's utenciels, the Door's money and other particulars Lybeled are Exhibited upon the Sentence of the Sherieff.

“The Sheriff of Perthshire having upon Feb. 24th, 1748, found the Lybel of the pretended presb^y of Perth against Mr Alex^r Moncrieff and other members of the Kirk-Session of Abernethy Relevant as to the poor's money, Church Utensils and other particulars belonging to the said Session, and having sustained the pursuers' title, and assigned the fourth day of March for the defenders to exhibit the particulars Lybeled, and the Kirk-Session of Abernethy having plead their title thereto, and exhonored themselves as to the iniquity of any sentence that might pass against them Voiding their tittle to the same, They Do Hereby Protest that their being compelled by the Sentence of the Civil Magistrate to Exhibit the particulars

Lybeled shal not be constructed as yielding or giving up with their just right and tittle to the said Church's utensels, poor's money and other things belonging to them, And they do protest that the Pursuers shall be answerable and accountable to the said Kirk-Session of Abernethy and their successors in office for the said poor's Money and Church utensils and other particulars contained in the Indentur herewith Exhibit along with Keys of the poor Box, when the Lord shall Grant times of Reformation, and they further Protest that their exhibiting the particulars Lybeled upon the sentence of the Civil Magistrate shall not be constructed any acknowledgment of Lawfull jurisdiction in the said pretended Pby. as a Court dully Constituted, or any Receding from Testimonies formerly Emitted, and particular the Declinator Anno 1739 of all the Judicatours of the Established Church, to all which this Session do adhere. And They likewise Protest, that it shal not be constructed any Homologation of the illegall and disorderly Intrusion of Mr Andrew Gray upon the Paroch of Abernethy, against which they do remonstrate as most sinful, disorderly and Destructive of the interest of the Gospell in the place, and an unlawfull and unwarrantable Intrusion upon the labours of Mr Alex^r Moncrieff, min^r of the Gospel at Abernethy. And the Session do agree that Mr Alex^r Moncrieff, min^r of the Gospel in this place, with David Small, William Henderson and John Lowry, Elders, Mr David Wilson, preacher of the Gospel, and David Dryburn, Deacons, do enter this their Protestation upon the fourth Day of March 1748, when particulars Lybelled are Exhibit according to the Sentence of the Sheriff of Perthshire.—Signed in Name and by Appointment of the Kirk-Session of Abernethy, March 14, 1748.—
Sic subscribitur, ALEX^R MONCRIEFF."

The discipline of the Seceders was stern, and their antipathy to the Established Church bitter. The following example will be quite sufficient:—

December 12, 1757.—The Session met and constitute with prayer by Mr Math. Moncrieff. Sed^t Mr Alex^r Moncrieff (min^r), William Henderson and others (elders and deacons). Compeared William Walker, acknowledging his sin in traveling upon the Sabbath day, and also in going to the Established Church, and when found fault with for so doing, he went to Orwell for some time, and heard Mr Mair. The Session agreed to delay the affair at present. William being called, this was intimate to him.

It is only right to add that neither Disestablishment nor Voluntaryism were principles of the early Seceders. Voluntaryism, which

was in the nature of things a necessity for the existence of their Church, was ultimately resolved into a principle, and is still held as such by the United Presbyterian Church. So is it with the dogma of Disestablishment; it was a late growth, springing up as a result of the democratic upheaving, and largely helped by the influence of the French Revolution. The late revered Principal of the United Presbyterian Church, in his *Life of Dr John Brown*, says: "It was not till the close of the eighteenth century that the impulse given by the American and French Revolutions, and the impressions made by the constant discussion of the claims of the Roman Catholics in the British Parliament, began to produce a wide and conscious divergence among the Seceders from the ground practically occupied by their fathers."¹ That ground was the support of the Establishment principle.

The subject of the burgess oath split the Seceders into two parties, and afforded another illustration of the "dissidence of dissent." The oath contained this clause: "I profess and allow, with my heart, the true religion presently professed within this realm, and authorised by the laws thereof. I will abide and defend the same to my life's end, renouncing the Romish religion called Papistry." Mr Moncrieff took a leading part among those opposed to the swearing of this clause: the controversy led to the Burghers and Antiburghers in the Associate Synod, and Mr Moncrieff became prominent as a strong Antiburgher. Those who asserted the lawfulness of the oath were known as the Burghers, while those opposed to it were called the Antiburghers: the former were regarded as the more lax, the latter as the more rigid; the former were more numerous on the south side of the Tay, the latter on the north; each party claimed to be the true Associate Synod.

In 1749 Mr Matthew Moncrieff, eldest son of the minister, was ordained colleague to his father,—an appointment that was

¹ P. 169.

rendered necessary by the heavy duties of the charge. Mr Moncrieff, however, discharged the duties of the professorship and preached with great regularity, while the son rendered important help in the pastoral office.

Mr Moncrieff was strongly opposed to Mr Mair of Orwell for holding a belief in universal redemption, and took no small part in his deposition and excommunication. Strong and robust as this Seceder always appears, we cannot love his intolerance.

Shortly before his death he was anxious that the Synod should lay before the king a statement of their grievances concerning the condition of religion in the land, and a petition that they should be redressed. His brethren were opposed to the motion, and although he submitted it at several meetings, he did not receive their sanction to it. The principle seemed to the opposers too Erastian to be accepted. It shows, however, that Mr Moncrieff did not believe in the dogma which severed the civil ruler from religion. He was a voluminous writer, and his works are as follows :—

The Deity of Jesus Christ proved and asserted from the Holy Scriptures. 1730.

The Duty of Contending for the Faith. A Sermon. 1732.

An Enquiry into the Principle, Rule, and End of Moral Actions. 1735.

A Review and Examination of some Principles in Campbell's Discourse, proving that the Apostles were no Enthusiasts. 1735.

Christ's Call to the rising Generation considered. Three Sermons. 1740.

Act of the Associate Presbytery concerning the Doctrine of Grace (jointly with Ebenezer Erskine). 1744.

The Duty of National Covenanting explained. 1747.

An Examination of the separating Brethrens' pretended Right to the Exercise of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. 1748.

Animadversions upon Mr Ralph Erskine's Fancy, Still no Faith, &c. 1749.

England's Alarm. 1756.

Sermons and Tracts. Two vols. 1759.

He was the last survivor of the four seceding brethren. Mr Wilson died in 1742; Ralph Erskine in 1752; Ebenezer in 1754. "And is Ralph gone?" said Ebenezer, on hearing of his brother's death. "He has twice got the start of me; he was first in Christ, and now he is first in glory."¹ Mr Moncrieff died on October 7, 1761, aged sixty-six years. In the previous August, at the funeral of a brother minister, he said: "My brother has got the start of me. It was a question whether he or I should be first removed. The Lord has decided it. He knows who are ripe."²

He was twice married—first in 1722 to Mary, eldest daughter of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Baronet.³ Mr Seton tells the following striking incident. Sir John Clerk had often observed that it would be a very pleasant thing to fall asleep at night and awake in heaven. On the night of his daughter's wedding, or that succeeding, he retired at the usual hour, and some little time afterwards was followed by Lady Clerk, who found him quite dead, as if in a pleasant sleep, with his head resting on the palm of his hand.⁴

The issue of this marriage was Matthew, his successor both in estate and ministry.

In 1728 he married Jean, eldest daughter of William Lyon of

¹ History of the Scottish Church, by W. Stephen, p. 521.

² Seton's House of Moncrieff, p. 109.

³ Sir John Clerk did not sympathise with the position of his brother-in-law. In his Memoirs we find the following: "About the end of this summer [1722] I went over to Culfargy, near the Bridge of Earn, to visite my sister Mary and my new brother-in-law. She seemed to be very content and easy in her circumstances, for Culfargy was a very sober good man, except he should carry his very Religious whims so far as to be very uneasy to every Body about him, as indeed, hapned not long after."—Sir John Clerk's Memoirs (Scot. Hist. Society), p. 113.

The baronet complained that although Culfargy comes to preach in his neighbourhood, he never comes near him. True religion, Sir John considered, consists not in forms but in acts of charity, benevolence, and brotherly love, as well as of faith. He also refers to the action taken by the Seceders against the Government in the Porteous affair, and describes it as "abominable." Referring to Whitefield, he says, "I wish you would only imitate him in the main thing—to wit, in a peaceable, charitable disposition."—*U! supra*, pp. 247, 248.

⁴ Seton's House of Moncrieff, p. 111.

Ogil, minister of Airlie, by whom he had fifteen children, of whom seven survived.

Some anecdotes have come down to us about the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie, which we give in order to present the human side of his character that almost disappears in the theological and ecclesiastical. On a certain occasion, when he was speaking of the tendency to wander during prayer, his attendant assured him that he felt no such weakness. "Well, John," said Culfargie, "you shall have the best horse in my stable, if, after family worship this morning, you can honestly assure me that your thoughts did not go astray." When the minister rose from his knees he said to his servant, "Now, what have you to say?" "Indeed, sir," John replied, "I thought of nothing but my devotions till the very end of your prayer, when I began to wonder whether you would give me the saddle along with the horse."¹

He was distinguished as a "man of prayer," and often uttered ejaculatory prayers in his ordinary ministrations in the pulpit or in lecturing to his students. On one occasion he made a longer pause than usual in the middle of his sermon, and a woman whispered to her neighbour in the pew, "See! Culfargie is away to heaven, and has left us all sitting here."²

He became absorbed in a great idea, and after what has been said in this chapter, no defence is needed for the truth of the following: On a certain occasion, when a friend was pointing out to Culfargie's son certain improvements which would give the estate a new appearance, Matthew said, "New! my father cares for nothing new except the New Covenant."³

There is a magnificent old yew-tree still to be seen near the present farmhouse of Culfargie, and it is said that Mr Moncrieff frequently used it as a resort for meditation and prayer, and that he also on occasions used it as a pulpit to preach from. He was

¹ Seton's Budget of Anecdotes, No. 196.

² M'Kerrow's History, p. 831.

³ House of Moncrieff, p. 111.

heard once praying aloud there by a passer-by, who described the exercise as a "struggle with the devil."¹

A country gentleman was rebuked by him for Sabbath-breaking, and with indignation asked, "Who gave you a right to impede my movements?" To which Mr Moncrieff replied, "You will learn that at the day of judgment," and walked off. The words are said to have taken effect.

To conclude in the words of his biographer, Dr Young: "There was a raciness about the living man, if waning tradition can be trusted, and a peculiarity of minor feature, which would have required an intimate contemporary, and that contemporary skilled in limning, to bring them out with adequate effect. He seems to have possessed a high combination of practical thinking, ardour of feeling, and promptitude in action, which fitted him very peculiarly for the work of his day; and he rose to his eminence less by the strength of his intellect than by the frank, open, and manly sincerity which met the eyes of all who knew him." "His name," says Dr M'Kerrow, "will descend with honour to posterity, as one of that small and intrepid band of men with whom the Secession originated."

Not only did the minister of Abernethy shed lustre around the Secession² by his personality, he also supported it by his considerable wealth. The first church, manse, and glebe belonging to his newly-formed congregation here were almost, if not altogether, the result of his own personal munificence, and many another struggling congregation benefited by his liberality.

"The first Scottish seceders," says Professor Story, "quitted the Church in 1733; and before the end of the century the body they founded had split into four subordinate divisions. They renounced the Church because of its unfaithfulness in respect of

¹ House of Moncrieff, p. 110.

² For Carlyle's view of the Secession clergy generally, see 'Reminiscences,' vol. i. pp. 81-83.

a number of principles and practices, probably not one of which their descendants now hold by.”¹ The Church which Moncrieff helped to form is to-day represented by the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and while making every acknowledgment of the great work it has done and is still doing, it is to be regretted that as a Church it has taken such a decided attitude for the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland, which, unencumbered by the patronage laws — the fruitful source of nearly all its troubles — has proved itself to be an earnest, living Church, possessed of inexhaustible capacities, and, while endeavouring to be faithful to her great traditions and her national calling, is daily growing in the esteem of the Scottish people. For past service, present devotion, future possibilities, its friends seek to defend and maintain it as the National Church, while they are endeavouring, in accordance with their trust, and in the spirit of its constitution, to make it more comprehensive, efficient, and acceptable.

¹ Preface to Church of Scotland, vol. i. pp. xxviii, xxix.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF ABERNETHY SUBSEQUENT
TO THE SECESSION.

THE history of the parish subsequent to the Secession has a more limited range, but it is not without its interest. For several years after Mr Moncrieff's deposition in 1740, the parish church seems to have been closed,—at any rate, it was without an ordained minister,—and it is to be inferred that the great body of the people sympathised with the position of their former parish minister. The Presbytery Records give no light upon the parish church, but on May 13, 1744,

Compeared David Carmichael of Balmedie, Mr Patrick Ross of Innerneathie, Advocate, Heritors of the Parish of Abernethy, and gave in a Petition in behalf of themselves and other Heritors of the said Parish whose names are thereunto subjoined, setting forth that the school thereof has been for some considerable time vacant, and cannot be regularly settled, as the Parish is now vacant of a minister, without the authority of the Presbytery, and therefore craving that the reverend Presbytery would be pleased to give the necessary directions for calling a meeting of the Heritors for choosing and presenting a schoolmaster to the said Parish.

The Presbytery taking the affair into their most serious consideration, after discoursing thereon, unanimously agreed to grant the Desire of the said Petition, and appointed and hereby appoints to-morrow fortnight, being the fourteenth Day of June next, for that Purpose, and intimation hereof to be made at the Parish Church of Abernethy sabbath next:

further, they appoint their Clerk to write to the non-residing Heritors and acquaint them of the Design of the Meeting.

February 27, 1745.—The Presbytery recommend it to Mr John Moncrieff and Mr Bryce to acquaint the Heritors of Abernethy that it is expected they will take the proper steps in order to the planting that Parish.

March 27, 1745.—The Presbytery recommends to Mr Bannerman to Converse with Kilgrastoun, Mr Carmichael of Balmedie, and John Oliphant of Carpow anent taking proper steps for the speedy settlement of the Parish of Abernethy as he shall have access to them, and report.

May 4, 1745.—Mr Bryce reported that in consequence of the appointment laid on him he had commenced with Mr Laurence Craigie of Kilgraston and Mr Carmichael of Balmeady anent the settlement of the Parish of Abernethy, and that these gentlemen answered they would cheerfully concur in supplying the said Vacancy. Further, Mr Bannerman reported that he also spoke with Mr Hay of Mugdrum and the Lady Innernethy, heritors of that Parish, upon that subject, who also signified their readiness to join in applying the Presbytery for the comfortable and speedy settlement of that parish.

July 23, 1745.—There was a Petition of sundry heritors and elders of the Parish of Abernethy laid before the Presbytery, representing that the said Parish has ever since the deposing of Mr Alex^r. Moncrieff, late minister of the Gospel there, laboured under several inconveniences particularly set forth in the said Petition. The Presbytery after some reasoning on that affair unanimously agreed to appoint and hereby appoint a Parochial Visitation to be held by the whole Presbytery at Abernethy on Tuesday, the 28th of August next, and also appoints Mr Wemyss their Moderator to preach there on that occasion, when the Presbytery are to have under their consideration the several matters contained in the said Petition, or any other matters of public Concern to the Parish, and the Clerk is ordained to write letters giving timeous Intimation thereof to the Heritors of the said parish, and a Copy of this is to be affixed to the most patent Church door of Abernethy.

The Presbytery met at Abernethy on 20th August 1745; the minute was read, and intimation made at the most patent Church door, that the Heritors, Elders, and Inhabitants of the Town and Parish of Abernethy might appear and attend. Compeared Mr David Carmichael of Balmeadie, Mr Laurence Craigie of Kilgraston, Advocate, John Moir of Aberargie, Mr Peter Hay of Leys, Junr., Robert Pitcairn of Pitblae, John Balvaird of Ballomiln, and several other heritors; also Henry Ballingal, Elder, and sundry heads of families.

Kilgraston represented that, considering the present circumstances of the said parish, it would be proper for the Presbytery to appoint supplies to be made there from time to time; to Inquire into the state of the Parish, the Session Records, Poors' Money, Church Utensils, &c., and to take the fittest steps to recover them; to have a Session-Clerk Settled and the Session made up.

The presbytery appoint supplies; nominate the schoolmaster session-clerk and precentor; as the power of session is under the circumstances legally in themselves, they appoint three of their number or any two of them to meet in session with Henry Ballingal and any other elder or elders ordained in the said parish who may attend and join them. They appoint a meeting of heritors for repairing the kirk; they appoint their officer to "summon, warn, and charge" Mr Alexander Moncrieff and others "to compear before the Presbytery at their next ordinary meeting, and to bring with them, exhibit, and produce upon oath the Session Records, poors' money, register of baptisms, Church utensils, Mortcloth, Bonds, Bills, and all other writs of Evidents belonging to the said Parish of Abernethy, to be Lodged in the hands and Custody of the said Presbytery in order to be disposed of as they shall appoint and direct."

The Presbytery further appoints Alex^r Henderson to officiate as Church Beddel or officer, and he to have and enjoy the usual perquisites belonging to that office.

They likewise Impower the said Mr Adamson and Henry Ballingal to grant Testimonials to such persons as Call for the same and are found qualified.

August 28, 1745.—Mr Alexander Moncrieff and others being "contumacious," a summons is to be executed against them before the sheriff court.

Perth, December 31, 1746.—The presbytery called for the report of their committee who were appointed to moderate in a call for one to be minister of the parish of Abernethy. By

the *jus devolutum* the presbytery had the right of appointment, but they proceeded in accordance with the wishes of the people. Notwithstanding the great Secession congregation, there were still many whose hearts beat warm towards the old Church, and Mr ANDREW GRAY, a probationer of the presbytery of Edinburgh, was elected by a majority. The names of the voters are given individually, with the manner in which they voted, and a test is afforded of how the affections of the people cling round an old institution, when it is stated that the names of the heritors, elders, and members who took part in the election cover five large pages of the Presbytery Records.

The call was sustained; Mr Gray successfully passed his presbytery trials, and on June 16, 1747, was ordained minister of the parish.

Church, manse, and offices were in such a state of disrepair that a presbyterial inspection was necessary; the repairs were ordered to be executed, and the assessment fixed by the presbytery. Mr Gray had also an early battle over the records and church utensils, and gained his case.

We learn something of the personality of Mr Gray—afterwards Dr Gray—from some contemporaneous records. He appears as a shaping influence in “Jupiter” Carlyle’s career, who thus refers to him in his Autobiography:—

In harvest of this year [1747] I was presented by John Hay, Esq. of Spot, to the church of Cockburnspath. As my father and grandfather were always against resisting Providence, I was obliged to accept of it. It was an obscure distant place, without amenity, comfort, or society, where if I had been settled, I would have more probably fallen into idleness and dissipation than a course of study; for preferment is so difficult to be obtained in our Church, and so trifling when you have obtained it, that it requires great energy of mind not to fall asleep when you are fixed in a country charge. From this I was relieved, by great good luck. There was a Mr Andrew Gray, afterwards minister of Abernethy, who was a very great friend of my father’s. He had been preaching one Sunday in the

beginning of 1747, for Fred. Carmichael, minister of Inveresk, and stayed with him all night; from him he had drawn the secret that President Forbes, who lived in his parish, had secured for him a church that was recently vacant in Edinburgh. Gray, who was very friendly and ardent, and knew my father's connections, urged him without loss of time to apply for Inveresk. By this time I had preached thrice at Cockburnspath, and was very acceptable to the people. My father was unwilling to take any step about a church that would not even be vacant for a year to come; but Gray was very urgent, and backed all his other arguments with my father with the idea that his not doing his utmost would be peevishly rejecting the gift of Providence when within his reach. My father at last mounted his horse, for that he would have done had the distance been but half a mile, and away he went, and found Lord Drummore on the point of going to Edinburgh for a week. My father opened his budget, which he received most cordially, and told him there was great probability of success, for that he was well enough to write both to the Duke of Buccleuch the patron, and to the Duke of Queensberry, his brother-in-law. Besides that, Provost Bell of Dumfries had everything to say with the Duke of Queensberry. In a few posts there were favourable answers from both the dukes, and a promise of Inveresk.¹

Dr Carlyle was evidently warmly disposed towards "the friendly and ardent" minister of Abernethy, and we find the following reference to Mr Gray at a later part of the Autobiography: "Andrew Gray, minister of Abernethy, was a man of wit and humour, which had the greater effect; his person was diminutive, and his voice of the smallest treble."²

Mr Gray was a hard-working minister and a faithful pastor in his parish, as the Records testify and as his people well knew; but he was also a man whose culture and fine instincts made him a prominent figure in an interesting group. Among his close personal friends were the Earl of Kinnoul (to whom he dedicated his volume on the Parables), Principal Hill of St Andrews, and many others. We find him referred to in Principal Hill's biography as follows; and it may be added that, previous to being ordained

¹ Autobiography of Dr Alexander Carlyle, Minister of Inveresk, pp. 202, 203.

² Ibid., p. 267.

minister of Coldstream by the presbytery of Haddington, Mr Hill had been Professor of Greek at St Andrews:—

In September of the same year [1778] Mr Hill was ordained by the presbytery of Haddington to Coldstream. Dr Gray of Abernethy, a man of eminent talents as a theologian, who from his excellent understanding and brilliant wit, of which many instances have been preserved, was much valued by those who had the pleasure of being acquainted with him, and with whom Mr Hill, from often meeting him at Lord Kinnoul's, lived in habits of close friendship and intimacy, congratulated him upon his ordination in a manner most creditable to him, and showing the high opinion which was entertained of his acquirements. Lord Kinnoul has told me. . . . It was a piece of news very agreeable to me that you should be connected with the Church for which God and nature plainly intended you, and not to spend your whole time in teaching boys ὦ, ᾯ, τó.¹

In the Travels of the Rev. James Hall we find the following references to the Secession minister and Dr Gray, which show that they were on the most intimate and friendly terms:—

Mr Moncrieff's lady, a very handsome woman, a daughter of Mr Scott of Cotts, in the East Nook of Fife, was of a disposition quite congenial, and, added to this, a very extraordinary share of true wit and humour. The sociability and the frankness of Matthew, and the gaiety and wit of Mrs Moncrieff, were united in Mr Gray, the minister of the Established Church of Abernethy, who inherited, like his predecessor, a paternal estate. Though but a very small one, and not at all to be compared with that of Culfargie, it was a good help to his stipend, and with both under the management of his lady, an excellent woman, being both genteel in her manners and prudent in her conduct, he was enabled to indulge, in no small degree, his natural turn to the hospitable intercourses of society. The families at the parsonage of Abernethy and at Culfargie lived together in the greatest intimacy, which was considered by the Seceders as a great backsliding on the part of their pastor. The strictness, the dismal tone, and the hypocrisy, too, of the Seceders, served Mrs Moncrieff (who had professed herself to be a Seceder only out of complaisance to her husband) as an inexhaustible fund of merriment. There were other two persons in

¹ Life of Principal George Hill, D.D., by George Cook, D.D., F.R.S.E., p. 76.

this neighbourhood besides the minister of the Established and the Seceding minister's wife, highly distinguished by wit and humour. They were also distinguished by eccentricities in their character and conduct, which sometimes gave their sallies a wider course, and still more celebrity. These were, Mr Friar, laird of Invernethy, and Mr Keir, laird of the Western Rhynd. These four persons were not unfrequently to be found in company together; and certainly, if a stranger passing through this parish had happened to fall in with this society, he would have been apt to set Abernethy down, not for the most dismal and humdrum but the merriest place in Britain.

When Mr Gray came first to Abernethy the students avoided him as they would have done Satan; but on perceiving his intimacy with their own minister, and understanding, also, that he was reckoned a man of good parts, as well as of regular university education, some of them, the most intelligent we may suppose, sought his acquaintance, which, frank as he was, they easily obtained. Mr Gray observed to one of these students, of whose capacity he had formed a good opinion, that there could not be a better course of practical logic, or a better introduction to reasoning and investigation on all subjects, than to study Euclid's Elements of Geometry. The student said he certainly would. Mr Gray sent him an Euclid. In eight days' time he brought it back. "What," said Mr Gray, "have you done with Euclid already?" "Oh yes," said the other, "I have read all the enunciations, which seem to be true enough, and very good reading. I did not trouble myself with the A's and B's."¹

The Doctor of Divinity Degree was conferred on Mr Gray in 1770, and his publications were (1) Two Single Sermons, Edinburgh, 1763-67, 8vo; and (2) A Delineation of the Parables of Our Blessed Saviour, Edinburgh, 1777, 8vo—a volume which passed through several editions, and was widely known last century. Dr Gray did much to improve the state of the church, and during his ministry the old manse, now known as the "Poplars," was built. He died on November 27, 1779, after having served the parish in holy things for thirty-two years.

During his ministry the parish was visited by a writer already quoted. Mr Hall writes with a racy pen, and was an eyewitness of what he wrote. Having considered the Secession in the light

¹ Travels in Scotland, vol. i. pp. 209-211.

of its leaders and its original documents, it will not be uninteresting to give this writer's impressions of the Secessionists as he saw them and heard about them last century. He says:—

As Abernethy was once the religious metropolis of the Seceders, as well as the metropolitan see of Scotland in the time of the Picts, I shall here mention some leading features in the doctrine and character of a sect still very considerable, once so numerous as to equal the whole established church, and that has, from Scotland, ramified into England and all countries speaking the English language.

It might, perhaps, be sufficient to observe, in general, that the Seceders are religionists whose great aim is, to restore not only the severe and gloomy spirit of the Covenant, so famous in the history of Scotland, but the Covenant itself. At a certain age every Seceder, male and female, swears to observe the Covenant. Nay, they hold it a duty to renew or take the solemn league and covenant from time to time. Scotland, they say, is a covenanted kingdom. One of their principal leaders, Mr Moncrieff, the laird of Culfargie, and minister at the same time of Abernethy, near which his estate, one of the most considerable in that parish, lay when they first broke off from the Kirk, was not restrained without much difficulty from going to London, in order to call upon the king, George II., to take the Covenant.

Their ecclesiastical theory is a mixture of Popish tenets with those of English Dissenters and Congregationalists. They maintain that it is not the king and other lay patrons, but the Christian people in their respective congregations, that have the right of nomination to ecclesiastical benefices; and that the Kirk ought not to pay any regard to royal proclamations for thanksgivings, or for fasts. All these things, they maintain, fall within the councils of the Church in national concerns, and to those of synods and presbyteries in those that are local. The only head of the Church they observe is Jesus Christ, and the Church ought to be governed solely by His ministers. They are severe disciplinarians, insisting on offenders, if not doing public penance, yet professing their repentance, on receiving a private rebuke and admonition, on account of little slips of life, too common (though, no doubt, both immoral and irreligious) to excite any general or lively abhorrence. Nay, they see sin where others do not perceive it. They hold it to be a great sin for men and women to dance together, which they call promiscuous dancing, and the common people dancing *promisky* as being wholly incompatible with a holy frame of mind. The dancing of men with men, and women with women, they tolerate, though even this they do not altogether approve. . . . With regard to spiritual doc-

trines, they are rigid Antinomians, stiffly maintaining the particular or arbitrary election of some individuals, in preference to others, without any regard whatever to merit or demerit. . . . They affect to call themselves the *witnessing remnant*, witnessing and protesting against the errors and corruptions of the church. They are very scrupulous about the characters of those to whom they administer the sacraments, or rather about the state of their soul respecting matters of faith; carrying their inquiries on this point almost the full length of auricular confession; particularly inquiring into the date or moment of their conversion, and whether they be sure, or at least pretty sure, of their being among the number of the elect.

They condemn private baptism, nor will they admit those who are notoriously ignorant or profane to be sponsors for their children.

They also condemn all clandestine and irregular marriages, though recognised and held valid by the law of Scotland; nor will they marry any persons unless they have been proclaimed in the parish church on two different Sundays, or, as they call them, Lord's Days. . . .

After the death of Mr Alexander Moncrieff, one of the principal fathers, and certainly the principal patron of the Secession, the rigid tone that marked its first establishment at Abernethy was greatly relaxed. Mr Matthew Moncrieff, though a firm believer in all the distinguishing doctrines of the Seceders, was, by nature, social, frank, and candid; a man of lively passions, and prone to a reciprocation of civilities and good offices with all his neighbours. Mr Matthew, a laird as well as a minister, was a bit of a sportsman; and though he did not dare to shoot, he enjoyed sometimes the diversion of coursing with a couple of greyhounds which he kept, to the great scandal of his congregation, and other Seceders. One Sunday, as he was crossing the Aichils to assist at the Seceder sacrament at Auchtermuchty, a hare started from under his horse's feet, and he could not refrain from aiming a lash at her with his whip, and even galloping a few paces after her as she fled. This was reported by the servant who accompanied him on his return to Abernethy. It was a great offence, and a subject of much sorrow. Mr Matthew was rebuked by the associate presbytery, and obliged to profess contrition. Matthew roared so incessantly against the established church, lustily thumping the pulpit, and was withal of so open and kindly a disposition, that he was a general favourite among the Seceders of all parts. Some of the more hypochondriac, when he was mentioned, would say, shaking their heads, "Ay, he is a man that would gar onybody like him. But oh! that beast," meaning the hare. Others, not quite so strait-laced, would say, "Hoot! he's no a wrang man, for a' the beast." This became a proverb in all the middle parts of Scot-

land, and is so at this day. Speaking of any one who, though subject to some failing, is a good sort of a person on the whole, they say, "He's no a wrong man, for a' the beast."¹

Most interesting of all, however, is the description of a Secession sacrament, as given in the words of one with whom Mr Hall had an interview at Abernethy, and who had seen these "Occasions" frequently :—

"The sacrament week at Abernethy, which may be considered as the holy city, the Jerusalem of the Seceders, is one of the greatest curiosities to be seen in all Scotland ; being a lively representation and remembrancer of the times of the covenant and field conventicles. The same spirit that assembled the covenanters on Loudon-hill in the reign of Charles II., draws together the Seceders at this day [1776] annually to the Muckle Binn at Abernethy, which is held generally in June or July, when the labours of the spring are over, and those of the harvest have not commenced (for there is scarcely anything of what is called in England hay-harvest, in Scotland), and when the days are long and the nights short.

"When the anniversary of the Occasion draws near, the sermons for some weeks are animated with more than usual zeal and fervour. The Sunday immediately preceding that of the sacrament Sunday may be considered as the actual commencement of the religious campaign, which is continued, either in reconnoitring, as it were, and various movements, or in hot action. On that Sunday the minister states the duty of communicating ; but, at the same time, the danger of communicating unworthily, and of 'eating and drinking damnation to themselves,' in such strong language that it is a great wonder that any one, believing as they do, should venture on the consecrated elements. In fact, some modest and ingenuous spirits, as well as those of a melancholy cast, do hang back from the communion, while others of a more sanguineous temperament and greater presumption boldly advance to the communion table, rejoicing in some motion of the animal spirits, or emotion, which they call the faith of assurance. The elders, in the meantime, make reports concerning their neighbours and warn the minister to be very cautious how he admits such and such an one to the table, without sifting him to the bottom ; in which reports they are supposed frequently to gratify their private resentments, or other malignant passions.

¹ Travels in Scotland by an Unusual Route, by the Rev. James Hall, A.M., pp. 200-209.

"Meanwhile the news of the approaching Occasion at Abernethy spreads far and wide. Travellers in every direction, east, west, south, and north, inquire at the inns where they stop into the cause of so many people, men and women, trudging along the roads for the space of ten or twenty miles. Even the ferry boat between Stratherne and the Carse of Gowrie is unusually busy. The glen of Abernethy, hearing the tread of unusual feet, is astonished at this invasion of his solitary grandeur.

"By Wednesday night the street, with the little lanes or closes about Abernethy, is in motion. The farmhouses in the neighbourhood, too, are full of friends and brethren from remote parts of the country. The barns also are full of men and women, young and old. Much in the same manner we may suppose that Jerusalem, with its environs, was crowded at the Passover. . . .

"Thursday is the fast-day preceding the sacrament. Three different ministers preach from ten o'clock to about six or seven in the evening, with an interval of only half an hour for refreshment. The minister of Abernethy himself is a silent auditor; but, when all the strangers have done, he mounts the pulpit, and recapitulates to the audience the substance of their sermons, adding exhortations of his own. An equal or greater number of ministers continue the work of preaching in a tent on the Muckle Binn for an equal length of time.

"On Friday there is a cessation of preaching. On Saturday it is resumed, but not till about one o'clock; it is continued, however, till about eight. On the dismissal of the congregations, I mean that within and that without doors, such of the intended communicants as had not been furnished with tickets, which they call tokens, for the communion table, receive them now from the ministers and elders. On Saturday evening the voice of some one who has retired for secret prayer is heard behind every hillock and furze-bush, and in the thickest parts of the standing corn. A dog here and there stands barking at a noise, which indicates that some stranger is near, though he cannot see him.

"At last the Occasion Sunday itself arrives. The church is crowded more than it is easy to imagine. Even the little black gallery, called the Cutty Stool, is crammed full; there is no disgrace in sitting in this seat on this occasion. . . . But the windows are beset with dense columns of people, eager to catch some of the words of the minister, who is serving at the communion table; nor is it without much difficulty that they can be persuaded to fall back for a minute or two, even for saving the life of a sister Seceder.

"In the meantime the work of preaching, praying, and singing psalms

goes forward at the tent. I have heard that in the time of old Culfargie it was sometimes necessary to have two tents, as no human voice could extend to the whole multitude which resorted to the Occasion at Abernethy in those days ; but I never saw more than one.

"The space occupied by the multitude in front, on either wing, and at the back too of the tent, may be, including the booths and beer-stands of publicans, about three-quarters of a mile. When a very popular preacher holds forth, the hearers sit fast, or seize the moment when they think that they have been wrought into a suitable frame of mind, to repair to the church, and press forward, as soon as they are able, to the communion table. When it is the turn of one less gifted to fill the tent, as they call it, they beckon to their acquaintance, and retire in crowds to the booths. . . . From about two o'clock in the afternoon to about six or seven, when there is an interval of an hour, the people passing to and fro, between the preaching tent, the church, and the booths of the suttlers, forms the whole, when viewed at any distance, into one compacted scene.

"This scene is seen to great advantage on the north and opposite banks of the Erne, near the Rhynd. The white linen caps and red cloaks, or red or striped plaids of the women of the lower and most numerous classes ; the silk cloaks and hats of others ; and the blue bonnets, or the hats of the men, make altogether a very striking as well as motley appearance. The singing of psalms by so great a multitude, with stentorian voices, to the number of twelve thousand, reverberated from the hill, is heard at a great distance, like the hum of bees. Had the scene been viewed by the Danes encamped on the eastern slope of the hill of Moncrieff, they would, beyond all doubt, have mistaken it for the camp of the enemy, engaged in some awful incantations.

"The Monday after the sacrament is a thanksgiving day. There are two preachers, both in the church and at the tent ; but the whole service is over by four o'clock, when all the ministers and elders repair to the minister's house, and enjoy a very plentiful, though, perhaps, I dare not venture to call it a very hearty dinner ; for even now the intensity of the religious tone is not wholly relaxed. Immediately after dinner, which is preceded by a very long grace, there is again singing of psalms, and a very long prayer.

"The pilgrims who had come to this holy city, after visiting, that is, taking a near view of Culfargie, return to their respective counties and parishes. Travellers who meet them on their return, as travellers in an opposite direction had done before, inquire at the first inn they alight at, 'What the deuce can be the meaning of so many people here and there all along the road for so many miles, as silent and downcast as if they were going to

the gallows?' 'Oh! it has been the sacrament at Abernethy.'" Here ends my friend's account of what he saw about thirty years ago.¹

Possibly the narrator of the above lacked the religious sympathy which would have enabled him to interpret the sacramental Occasion as it was felt by those early Seceders; possibly his description of it may err by its very literateness: yet, making allowance for both, one cannot but see that its spirituality was largely modified by a kind of corporeal element, and one feels no regret that such "Occasions" have passed away—that the sacrament is now administered with greater solemnity and reverence amid the quiet associations of the church. Still the description gives an interesting glimpse into last century Church life, and is the relic of a time that is now far from us.

The successor to the Rev. Dr Gray was the Reverend WILLIAM DUNCAN, who was translated from the neighbouring parish of Newburgh, and admitted to Abernethy on the 13th day of July 1780, after having served Newburgh for five years. He was presented to Abernethy by the patron, the Earl of Mansfield, and, as might be expected from the peculiar conditions of the parish from the Secession controversy, the people felt aggrieved at having no voice in the appointment, and appealed to the Assembly of 1780. The Assembly sustained the presentation. The petition is interesting for the tribute it gives Dr Gray and for the light it casts upon the Secession Church. Among other things it states:—

The situation of the parish of Abernethy is singular, and it is hoped will merit the attention of the Venerable Assembly: it is a large and populous parish, at the same time there are comparatively few of the parishioners who attend Divine Worship in the parish church. Secession, it will be remembered, in a great measure took its rise in this parish from

¹ Hall's Travels in Scotland, vol. i. pp. 226-232.

a conscientious scruple of the people in their submission to the Judicatory of the Church in the Article of violent Settlements. It is a fatal and melancholy truth that in this very parish Secession has made such rapid and alarming progress that there are almost as many thousands of Schismatics daily attending the Seceder meeting as there are hundreds who attend the public ordinances in the parish church, and in this very town of Perth, within five miles' distance, there are two meeting Houses of Seceders, the daily hearers in which do not number less than three or four thousand people, many of them in high characters of life, and of most respectable stations and circumspect conduct. It is well known too that of late years the deceased Dr Gray, their late worthy Pastor, had by his conciliatory address and assiduous application to the duties of his function gained over a goodly number of the disaffected part of the parish to the communion of the Church, and there was the fairest prospect of the happy fruits of his great attention to allay the heats and remove those shackles of party and faction prevalent in every corner of this distracted parish.

Mr Duncan was a faithful parish minister, and during his ministry the present parish church was built. It is a regret to us that in those days they knew nothing of restoration, and attached little value to historical association. The old church which they demolished was described by an eyewitness as "a great church with pillars which yet remain in its noble fabric"; and we wish that under the guidance of a qualified architect it had been restored and retained as the place of worship. A presbytery report of 1774 is interesting, as a dim reminiscence of it:—

The Presbytery having considered the Report of the Condition of the Church so far as Relates to the Choir thereof, that the Rooff of the said Choir is Insufficient, and that the Walls are in such disrepair as they will not be able to bear a new Rooff, and the Presbytery Finding that there is no occasion for the said Choir at present, the Church and Isle being sufficient to hold the ordinary Congregation, Agree that the Repairing or Re-building of the said Choir may be dispensed with untill the Congregation shall So increase as to Require more Room: And therefore Decern and Ordain that a Stone-and-Lime wall be Run up betwixt the said Church and the Choir. And Further the Presbytery Find that the North wall of the Church above the two Arches is not altogether sufficient, That the Rooff of the Isle is not sufficient, That the . . . Pulpit be altered and placed on the

said wall to be built betwixt the said Church and Choir, and likewise the Doors need Repair.

The heritors' minutes also testify to choir, aisle, and pillars, and speak also of a "west loft," which was unquestionably a later disfigurement. The present church was opened for worship in 1802.

Mr Duncan married Miss Jane Gillespie, daughter of Principal Gillespie of St Andrews, and two of his sons were ministers of the Church of Scotland: Alexander was minister of Coylton in Ayrshire; and after his father's death on the 12th of March 1809, David succeeded as minister of Abernethy.

The Rev. DAVID DUNCAN was ordained on the 21st day of September 1809. He was a student at St Andrews, and for some time boarded in the same family with two students who afterwards attained great eminence—Thomas Chalmers, and John Campbell, afterwards Lord High Chancellor of the United Kingdom. He served the parish for fifty-three years.

The Rev. ARCHIBALD SCOTT was translated from the East Church, Perth, and ordained minister of Abernethy on January 29, 1863. During his ministry the present manse was built; he was translated to Maxwell Church, Glasgow, on June 1, 1865. Since then he has filled other important charges: Linlithgow, Greenside Church, and St George's Church, Edinburgh, and has attained the highest eminence in the Church of Scotland, being elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1896.

The Rev. D. W. MILLAR, M.A., was translated from Anstruther-Easter, and ordained minister at Abernethy, November 16, 1865. He was translated to St John's Parish Church, Glasgow, on September 8, 1870.

The Rev. WILLIAM GORDON was translated from Ruthwell, Dumfriesshire, on March 23, 1871. After a faithful period of service, he died at Abernethy on January 30, 1890.

The present minister was ordained on September 23, 1890.

In 1892 a handsome baptismal font was presented to the parish church by Sir Alexander Moncrieff of Bandirran in memory of his ancestor, Alexander Moncrieff of Culfargie, who was ordained parish minister of Abernethy in 1720.

Two of the communion cups were presented to the parish church by former members of the Moncrieff family. The oldest one bears the inscription: "Mr John Moncreif of Colfargie gifted this cup to the Kirk of Aberneathie, 1693." Its companion cup bears the inscription: "Gifted this cup for the Kirk of Aberneathie by Mr Mathew Moncrife of Colfargie, 1709." Other two communion cups were presented in 1822 by Alexander Murray, Esq. of Ayton, one of the members of the parish church.

MINISTERS OF THE SECESSION CHURCH.

"Beginning with the Professor, the laird of Culfargie," says Mr Landreth, "the first four ministers of the Seceders at Abernethy laboured in or near the place of their nativity; and there, where they had been most thoroughly known for the longest time, were they most highly valued and honoured."¹

1. Rev. Alexander Moncrieff, M.A. Ordained September 14, 1720; seceded November 16, 1733; appointed Professor of Theology 1742; died 7th October 1761.

2. Rev. Matthew Moncrieff. Ordained as colleague to his father, January 31, 1749. (Called to Peebles 1754, but remained at Abernethy); died June 1767, aged forty-one.

¹ United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, p. 97.

3. Rev. Colin Brown. Ordained November 1767 ; died 8th July 1805, aged fifty-seven.

4. Rev. David Lawrie. Ordained as colleague to Mr Brown, 20th June 1803 ; died 21st December 1849, aged sixty-seven.

5. Rev. John Clark. Ordained as colleague to Mr Lawrie, 27th March 1839. In 1847 various sects united together and formed the United Presbyterian Church, and from that year the Secession church here was called Abernethy United Presbyterian church. During Mr Clark's ministry a new church was erected for the congregation. Mr Clark was Moderator of Synod in 1881, and died 3rd May 1885.

6. The Rev. William Paton, B.D., was ordained in 1886, and in 1895 was translated to Sandyford United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow.

7. The Rev. William T. Cairns, M.A., was ordained 11th June 1896.

When Mr Moncrieff, the first minister, became strongly Anti-burgher, a Burgher congregation was formed for a short time at Abernethy under the ministry of the Rev. Alexander Pirie.

Mr Pirie [says Dr Struthers], who was no ordinary person, produced much disturbance in the three rival religious denominations—Antiburgher, Burgher, and Relief. He was, without doubt, one of the most talented and accomplished theological writers Scotland ever produced, and it is to the disgrace of his country that his life has never been written. His natural temper seems not to have been good ; but his judgment was clear, his mind penetrating, and he was in many things, though he had his whims, far in advance of the times in which he lived.¹

He afterwards laboured at Blairlogie and Newburgh.

A Relief church was formed at Aberargie, as a result of the disputed settlement of the Rev. Mr Macfarlane as minister of the neighbouring parish of Dron. It did service for several years, and was supplied from 1835 by preachers from the Relief Presbytery of Perth. It is now extinct, and the building has been demolished.

¹ History of the Relief Church, p. 234.

The Free church of Abernethy was formed in 1843. At its jubilee service in 1893 the present highly esteemed minister, the Rev. Robert Stevenson, wrote :—

This time fifty years was an interesting period in the history of the Abernethy Free church congregation. They were busily engaged in completing the building of the church. The first meeting in connection with the affairs in the church was held in the house of Mr James Glass, farmer, Drumhead, on the 3rd April 1843. The minute of that meeting states, "That it was called for the purpose of forming an association to prepare for the coming event. The Rev. Mr Douglas, minister of Muthill, opened the meeting with a most impressive prayer." Then followed the names of the committee. The parish minister did not come out at the Disruption.

Many of the people could not follow that course, but on the first Sabbath after the Disruption assembled in Drumhead barn for public worship. At the first communion there sat down at the Lord's table 137 persons, and it was felt to be a time of great refreshing and revival. These times were undoubtedly distinguished for a great revival of personal Christianity in the hearts of God's people.¹

The first minister of the Free church was the Rev. James Simpson : ordained 1844 ; died 1856.

The second minister is the present incumbent, the Rev. Robert Stevenson : ordained 1856, after being assistant to Mr Simpson for more than a year.

¹ Perth Free Church Presbytery's Jubilee, p. 128.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REV. JOHN BROWN OF HADDINGTON, NATIVE OF
ABERNETHY.

THIS famous man, whose name was a household word in Scotland during the latter part of last century, and is still remembered with feelings of the deepest veneration, was born at Abernethy, in 1722, at a cottage (the foundation of which can still be seen) close to Carpow, a lovely estate at the eastern district of the parish.

His father [says his kinsman and biographer] was of the same name, John Brown, and was what in my young days was known as a customary weaver, of whom I knew many. At that time the hinds, or farm-servants, were allowed, amongst other perquisites, the use of a small piece of land upon which to grow flax, which was spun by the daughters, or spinsters, in their family; and the wife, or weaver of the family, having other occupation of more importance in the household, the yarn was given out to be woven by weavers who relied on the custom of their neighbours instead of seeking employment from the enterprising manufacturers of the day who occupied the place now taken with greater effect by the millowners of the present. His mother's name was Catherine Millie.¹

We know next to nothing of his stock: his forefathers were humble, yet they must have been characterised by solid worth, noble independence, and sterling honour, to have helped in the shaping of a character like that of John Brown. He was one of the many Scotsmen who have attained, and shed lustre around,

¹ Centenary Memorial of the Rev. John Brown of Haddington, p. 36.

positions of highest dignity in Church and State, and whose careers have glorified the humble scenes of their birth. The parents of such have been unknown to history, yet their best biography has been their distinguished sons, and posterity will always honour the home that helped to mould their character. In his short autobiography John Brown says:—

It was a mercy that I was born in a family which took care of my Christian instruction, and in which I had the example of God's worship, both evening and morning; which was the case of few families in that corner at that time. This was the more remarkable that my father, as I have heard, being born under Prelacy, got no instruction in reading, or next to none, but what he got from masters after he began to be a herd.

About the eighth year of my age I happened in the crowd to get into the church on the sacrament Sabbath, when it was common for all but intended communicants to be excluded. The table or tables, which I heard served before I was shut out, were chiefly served upon Christ, and in a sweet and delightful manner. This captivated my young affections, and has made me since think that little ones should never be excluded from the church on such occasions. Though what they may hear may not convert them, it may be of use to begin the allurements of their hearts to the Saviour.

My thirst after knowledge was great. My pride not a little instigated my diligence, particularly in learning by heart what catechisms I could get. I have found not a little advantage by this, especially by my learning of Vincent's and Flavel's Catechisms, and the Assembly's Larger Catechism. My parents' circumstances did not allow them to afford me any more but a very few quarters at school, for reading, writing, and arithmetic; one month of which, without their allowance, I bestowed upon the Latin.

My father dying about the eleventh year of my age, and my mother soon after, I was left a poor orphan, who had almost nothing to depend upon but the providence of God.

Meanwhile, in 1734, and especially in 1735, the Lord, by His Word read and preached, did not a little strive with and allure my soul. The reading of Alleine's 'Alarm to the Unconverted' contributed not a little to awaken my conscience and move my affections. Some of his hints, made worse by my mind, however, occasioned my legal covenanting with God. I made much the same use of Guthrie's 'Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ.' Indeed, such was the bias of my heart under these convictions, that I was willing to do anything but flee to Christ and His free grace alone

for salvation. In these times I had no small delight in reading religious books, the Bible, Rutherford's Letters, and the like; and by means of these, particularly by means of Gouge's 'Directions How to Walk with God,' was led into considerable circumspection in my practice. The sweet impressions made by sermons and books sometimes lasted several days on end, and were sometimes carried to a remarkably high degree. Under these I was much given to prayer, but concealed all my religious appearances to the uttermost of my power.

Four fevers on end brought me so low within a few months after my mother's death, as made almost every onlooker lose all hopes of my recovery: only I remember a sister, the most simple but the most serious of all us children of the family, told me that when she was praying for me, that word, "I will satisfy him with long life, and show him my salvation," was impressed on her mind, which she said made her perfectly easy with respect to my recovery. Apprehensions of eternity, though I scarce looked for immediate death in these troubles, also affected me.

But the death of my parents, and my leaving a small religious family to go into a larger, in the station of a herd-boy, for two or three years, was attended with not a little practical apostasy from all my former attainments. Even secret prayer was not always regularly performed, but I foolishly pleased myself by making up the number one day which had been deficient in another.

It was my mercy, too, that in all my services I was cast into families, except perhaps one, where there were some appearances of the grace of God, beside useful neighbours.¹

John Brown tended his sheep by the green pastures on Colzie Hill, and under the kind patronage of a venerable and godly shepherd named John Ogilvie. There while herding the sheep he had acquired some little knowledge of Latin and Greek, his proficiency in the latter being measured by his capacity to read but not translate. One acquainted with him in those days wrote:—

Mr Brown, confiding in Henry's [his herd companion] kind offices, one evening folds his fleecy charge, sets out on his journey of twenty-four miles in the night, and reaches St Andrews next morning. At length he discovers a bookseller's shop; he enters, and calls for his much-esteemed

¹ *Ut supra*, pp. 38-40.

book. The gentleman of the shop, surveying his appearance, his youth, his rustic look and dress, his ragged appearance, and without stockings or shoes, says, "What would *you* do with that book?" "I would have it." "'Tis vain for you to buy that book, you'll no' can read it." "I'll try to read it." In the course of this conversation some gentlemen entered the shop (said to be some of the professors of the college), who, while the bookseller was serving some customers, questioned Mr Brown as to his employment, residence, and teacher, and found he had never been at school. They requested the bookseller to find the book for the boy. He went and brought it, and throwing it down on the table, said, "Boy, if you can read that book you shall have it for nothing." Mr Brown caught it greedily, and began to read. The gentlemen present approved of his essay in reading Greek, and the generous bookseller made a present of the Greek Testament to Mr Brown, who without delay retraced his steps, and arrived in time to liberate his flock from the fold in the afternoon.¹

Having procured his treasure, John Brown pursued his studies in New Testament Greek until he had attained considerable proficiency; but his perseverance and self-reliance brought upon him another difficulty, which in those days of superstition was by no means a light one. He was accused of being in league with Satan and Satan's emissaries—the witches. We have his own account of it in the following words:—

By means of my anxious pursuit of learning, as I could get any opportunity, I had, by the Lord's assistance, acquired some knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and was beginning to purpose to use it in the service of Christ, if He should open a regular door. My learning of these languages without a master, except for one month, occasioned some talk of me and some small connection between some Seceding students and me, some of whom proved my steadfast friends, while others took a very different course. Having no knowledge of polite manners, being never more than a bashful herd-boy, I did not know the danger of saying the truth. Accordingly, I was simply drawn into imparting to an intimate friend a hint which was thought not so honourable to one of the students, though I meant nothing but a simple declaration of the truth, in answer to the question put to me by my friend. This was

¹ Centenary Memorial, pp. 43, 44.

represented by the student as false ; my words were misrepresented, as if they had borne that I was as, if not more, learned than he ; and to crown my afflictions, it was represented by him and his defenders that I had certainly got my learning from Satan.

As scarcely any person had ever appeared noted for the knowledge of languages but such as had learned at least some of them by their own mere industry, it manifested either strong prejudice or great ignorance of what had passed in the learned world to put this construction upon what my hard labour, by the blessing of God, had acquired to me. It was, however, thought necessary by the managers of it to hunt me down with this malevolent reproach. Nor did they spare to invent or hand about many more fictions of their own, in order to make it gain credit.

We now look upon witchcraft as an old-world superstition which advancing culture has swept away, but that was not the manner in which many of the eighteenth century regarded it. It was in those days a serious charge, involving not infrequently severe consequences, and good John Brown had to deal with those who regarded it as a "defection" that the Old Testament words, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," were not literally obeyed. On August 6, 1745, he wrote from Carpow a long letter, occupying now some seventeen pages of a book,¹ in which he defended himself against the charge. The letter was addressed to the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy, moderator of the session, and is interesting not only as a defence, but as a statement of how he learned the Greek. We give from it the paragraphs relating to this :—

Now as there are several stories anent my learning as that it is unprecedented—from the devil—that I learned in hills and dens, without a grammar, a master, &c., I shall endeavour to satisfy you in this matter. Now I think it is not from the devil on these accounts : because, 1st, I am, as I solemnly appeal to the God of heaven as witness, in no compact with him, nor did he ever speak to me *viva voce*, nor yet learned he me aught (as far as I know) by enthusiastick impulse, in which if I lie, may God avenge it. 1. I sought it from God by beginning my lessons of times

¹ *Ut supra*, pp. 53-70.

with prayer, as God is witness. 2. Its reasonableness further appears in that I had an occasional master, Mr Reid, from whom I got many lessons, and at him I spired all the unknown words I minded. Now if a fixed master can learn, an occasional one may do it too, tho' more slowly, for *majus et minus non variant speciem*. 2nd, It is well known that all arts use to arise from men's reason by learning. 3rd, Learned men, as Locke 'On Education,' and Clarke in his Introduction, tell us one may learn by industry; "nay," says Locke, "one's mother might teach him the Latin tongue," &c. As to grammar, it is the consent, I suppose of all men, it is not absolutely necessary, seeing it is only a superstructure founded on language. Now a foundation may well exist without a superstructure—at least Lilly, Watt, and Clarke, and Locke, are of this opinion. As the great question is anent the Greek, which I learned some of afore I got a Greek grammar, it runs thus:—

I learned the letters from Orth. Tab. Gram., marginal words in Ovid, and names in the New Testament; for reason told me that at least our unaccidented tongue could not much change names from what they were in the Greek: as (*e.g.*) 1. Words authoritatively interpreted, as Eloi lama sabachthani, Talitha cumi, Siloam, Corban, Golgotha, Emmanuel, Cephas, Aceldama; for if these be changed in any language,—as, for example, if Aceldama be made Acerdama, it would be false, for it would say—1st, That the Jews called that place Acerdama. 2nd, That Acerdama, *Hebraicè*, signifies a field of blood. And so in the matter of all words of this kind. 2. Words authoritatively called alien, as Abaddon, Armageddon. 3. Proper, obsolete, inequivalented names, as *Hebraicè*, Cainan, Arphaxad, &c. (Luke iii.); *Græcè*, Olympas, Priscilla, &c. 4. Names changed in one place from what they were in another, as Noah (Gen. x. i.); Noe (Luke iii.) Now, both being alike to our English, the reason of their change is the Greek; and, therefore, must be in the Greek as in ours. Now, all the Greek letters may be found by comparing Eloi lama sabachthani, Arphaxad, Capernaum, Sem, Aceldama, Ελοι λαμα σαβαχθανι, Αρφαξαδ, Καπερναουμ, Σημ, Ακελδαμα, Booz, Ragaw and Salmos, Βοοζ, Ραγαν Ψαλμος, &c., &c.

So prevalent was the report against which Brown defended himself in the letter, that when Ralph Erskine proposed him as a student in divinity to the Associate Presbytery, one of its members (said to be Moncrieff) objected on the ground that he had got his learning from the devil; and Erskine swept away

the objection by saying, "I think the lad has a sweet savour of Christ about him."

The Greek Testament from which John Brown acquired a knowledge of Greek is still a treasured heirloom in his family;¹ and his most distinguished and revered descendant, who will always be remembered as the author of 'Rab and his Friends,' makes the following reference to it and its original possessor. Writing of his father, the late Rev. Dr Brown, of Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh, he says:—

For the heroic old man of Haddington my father had a peculiar reverence, as indeed we all have—as well we may. He was our king, the founder of our dynasty; we dated from him, and he was "hedged" accordingly by a certain sacredness or "divinity." I well remember with what surprise and pride I found myself asked by a blacksmith's wife, in a remote hamlet among the hop-gardens of Kent, if I was "the son of the Self-interpreting Bible." I possess, as an heirloom, the New Testament which my father fondly regarded as the one his grandfather, when a herd-laddie, got from the Professor who heard him ask for it, and promised him it if he could read a verse; and he has in his beautiful small hand written in it what follows [here is given account of the St Andrews incident already mentioned]. There is reason to believe *this* is the New Testament referred to. The name on the opposite page was written on the fly-leaf. It is obviously the writing of a boy, and bears a resemblance to Mr Brown's handwriting in mature life. It is imperfect, wanting a great part of the Gospel of Matthew. The autograph at the end is that of his son, Thomas, when a youth at college, afterwards Rev. Dr Thomas Brown of Dalkeith.—J. B.²

There was something of the soldier in John Brown. In the '45, as Ebenezer Erskine mounted guard at Stirling against the Pretender, and received the special acknowledgment of the Duke of Cumberland, so Brown also was a Hanoverian. He served

¹ It was exhibited to the people, by Professor Crum Brown of Edinburgh, at the recent ordination of his kinsman, the Rev. W. T. Cairns, to the ministry of the United Presbyterian congregation at Abernethy.

² *Horæ Subsecivæ*, Second Series, pp. 66, 67.

in the Castle of Edinburgh, and took part in its defence.¹ He finished his military career after the news reached Fife that Prince Charles and his party were defeated at Culloden. When leaving for active service he had placed his collection of goods in a peat-stack on the farm of Cameron—a place that was regarded as a preventive against all moisture—and on his return after service was over, “the stack of peats, which had been gradually removing for the use of the family, was greatly reduced, and on the very next day of his arrival they came to the pack, which was perfectly safe, and all things in good condition.”²

He engaged in teaching a school at Gairney Bridge, near Kinross—a school that was likewise taught by Michael Bruce, the poet: afterwards he taught at Spittal, a village near Penicuik, and studied theology and philosophy under the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine of Stirling and the Rev. James Fisher of Glasgow, who were known as sympathising with the Burgher side of the controversy. After being licensed as a preacher of the Gospel, he was called by two congregations to be their minister—that of Stow in Mid-Lothian, and that of Haddington in East Lothian. “His choice was determined to Haddington,” says his grandson, “partly by feelings of sympathy with that congregation for disappointments it had already experienced, and partly by his modest estimate of his own qualifications, to which he felt the smaller of the two charges to be more suitable.” It was quite in accordance with what he wrote to another on a similar occasion regarding a small congregation: “Assure yourself, on the word of an old man, that when you come to give an account of them to the Lord Christ at His judgment-seat, you will think you have had enough.” He was ordained at Haddington, 4th July 1751; was appointed Professor of Theology by the Associate Burgher Synod, 5th May 1768; was invited to be Professor of Theology to the Dutch Church at

¹ Mackay's Fife and Kinross, p. 166.

² Centenary Memoir, p. 84.

New York, but declined ; died 19th June 1787, aged sixty-five years, after having served his church for thirty-six years. His last words were, "My Christ."

John Brown was a busy man, and a voluminous writer. His published works amounted to thirty-one volumes, and as the Rev. Mr Cairns of Stichel said in the Centenary sermon, "though many of these were only ephemeral, born of the time and occasion, and now dead and forgotten, there are some which have come down to us across the century, and have still a living force, both in this country and in America." His principal works are the 'Self-interpreting Bible' and the 'Dictionary of the Bible,' and they were well known in many of the households of Scotland—in fact, are still well known, and are frequently to be met with on the book-shelves of Scottish cottages. The Bible was called "self-interpreting" from the help given by marginal references that were intended to enable the reader without scholarship or teacher to compare one statement with another on the same, or some nearly allied, subject in Scripture.

Mr Brown was not blind to the imperfections of the Secession.

I look [he said in an address to his students] upon the Secession as indeed the cause of God, but sadly mismanaged and dishonoured by myself and others. Alas! for that pride, passion, selfishness, and un-concern for the glory of Christ and spiritual edification of souls which have so often prevailed. Alas! for our want of due meekness, gentleness, holy zeal, self-denial, hearty grief for sin, compassion to souls in im-mediate connection with us, or left in the Established Church, which became distinguished witnesses for Christ. Alas! that we did not *chiefly* strive to pray better, preach better, and live better than our neighbours.¹

There was, however, another characteristic of the Secession to which he was blind, and of which one of his written books was a defence—intolerance. At Glasgow in 1780 there was published a book—able and laborious—on the "Absurdity and Perfidy of all

¹ Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 16.

authoritative Toleration," by John Brown of Haddington, who was at that time the leading Nonconformist minister in Scotland.¹ When one considers impartially the facts of the case, as represented by the Secession Church, "Moderatism" seemed necessary not only as a protest but as the natural reaction of the human mind against the extreme and intolerant position occupied by the leaders of the movement. The larger freer air that we breathe to-day has been to a very considerable extent created for us by the toleration for which the Moderates struggled, and which they honourably represented.

There are several anecdotes about John Brown of Haddington that bring out interesting phases of his life and work, as well as the impression these made upon the people of his day.

A relative who had been taken to visit an aged bedridden woman, who had been brought up in another section of the Church, was thus addressed by her when she was told that the visitor was a grandson of John Brown of Haddington: "Are

¹ In connection with this it may be interesting to state the remarks of Dr Joseph Robertson: "Milton reproached the Scots of his day with adjuring

'The civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free.'

And such was the tenacity with which they clung to the persuasion that liberty to trample on the religion of others was essential to the liberty or the enjoyment of their own religion, that De Foe, the champion and martyr of religious freedom in England, writing after the Union, has a long and specious argument to prove that although toleration is indispensable in England, the difference in that respect between England and Scotland 'is so wide that no argument can be drawn from the one to the other'; that 'the Scots oppose a toleration by a Claim of Right'; that 'neither the Church nor the people of Scotland can legally give their consent to any act of toleration'; that 'the Church of Scotland is so established that her enemies cannot impose toleration upon her'; and that 'her Church privileges cannot be invaded by a toleration, without destroying the civil as well as ecclesiastic constitution.'—*Hist. of the Union*, pp. 28-31, edit. 1786.

"The doctrine that 'tolerating a false religion' is a sin forbidden in the Second Commandment, keeps its place to this hour in the Larger Catechism (quest. 108), agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster in 1648, and still sanctioned and used by the Church of Scotland, although it failed to receive the recognition of the State at the Revolution."—*Statuta Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ*, vol. i. p. xlvi.

there ony feck o' thae Brouns? for they tell me they are awfu' poorfu' i' the poopit."

It is said that an infidel, seeking to describe the earnest, impressive style of Brown's preaching, said, "He preached as if Jesus Christ were at his elbow."

When he was a professor at Haddington he felt it right to superintend his students at other than class hours. He was in the habit of visiting them at their lodgings, and occasionally at six or eight in the morning! On one occasion, going to a room where two lodged, one only was up, but the other, hearing John Brown approach, got up and slipped into a dressing closet. The professor asked for him, and being told he was in the closet, replied, "Oh, we're too little there."

On another occasion several of his students were so hot in a discussion that they did not hear him approach: he entered the room and said, no doubt with a hearty laugh, "Gentlemen, the 'Spectator' says never more than six should speak at once."

An excitable lad once waited on him and expressed a desire to be a preacher of the Gospel. Finding him weak in intellect and strong in conceit, Brown advised him to continue at his present occupation. "But," said the young man, "I wish to preach and glorify God." "My young friend," was the reply, "a man may glorify God making broom besoms: stick to your trade, and glorify God by your walk and conversation."

One man opposed his call to Haddington, and when he met Brown on the street said, "Ye see, sir, I canna say what I dinna think, and I think ye're ower young and inexperienced for this charge." "So I think too, David; but it would never do for you and me to gang in the face of the hale congregation."

The author of 'Rab and his Friends' adduces the following "as a singular illustration of the religious teaching of that time, and also of its strength": "A poor old woman, of great worth and excellent understanding, in whose conversation Mr Brown took

much pleasure, was on her deathbed. Wishing to try her faith, he said to her, 'Janet, what would you say, if after all He has done for you, God should let you drop into hell?' 'E'en's [even as] He likes: if He does, He'll lose mair than I'll do.' There is something not less than sublime in this reply."

A blacksmith of Tranent seeing him approach a house near the smithy on his pony, which was halting, said, "Mr Brown, ye're in the Scripture line the day—'the legs o' the lame are not equal.'" The minister replied, "Ay, and it says, 'So is a parable in the mouth of a fool!' In the same book it is written, 'Answer a fool according to his folly: lest he be wise in his own conceit.'"

It is reported that on crossing the Firth of Forth at Queensferry with a Highland laird in the boat, Mr Brown was grieved by the profane words he used. After landing, and the other passengers had dispersed, he approached the laird, and spoke to him respectfully against the bad habit into which he had fallen. The laird courteously thanked him, specially remarking on the thoughtful kindness that did not expose him before their fellow-passengers;—"Had you done that, I might have run you through with my sword."

In 'Horæ Subsecivæ' his kinsman narrates the following:—

The late Dr Husband of Dunfermline called on him when he was preparing to set out for Gifford, and was beginning to ask him some questions as to the place grace held in the divine economy. "Come away wi' me, and I'll expound that; but when I'm speaking, look you after my feet." They got upon a rough bit of common, and the eager and full-minded old man was in the midst of his unfolding the divine scheme, and his student was drinking in his words, and forgetting *his* part of the bargain. His master stumbled and fell, and getting up, somewhat sharply said, "James, the grace of God can do much, but it canna gi'e a man common-sense," which is as good theology as sense.

These anecdotes bring the consecrated, yet shrewd and humorous, side of John Brown's character before us, and the portrait will

be completed by the following reference from the delightful pen of the author just quoted :—

I doubt not my father regarded this little worn old book [Greek Testament] the sword of the Spirit which his ancestor so nobly won, and wore, and warred with, with not less honest veneration and pride than does his dear friend James Douglas of Cavers the Percy pennon borne away at Otterbourne. When I read, in Uncle William's admirable Life of his father, his own simple story of his early life—his loss of father and mother before he was eleven, his discovering (as true a *discovery* as Dr Young's of the characters of the Rosetta stone, or Rawlinson's of the cuneiform letters) the Greek characters, his defence of himself against the astonishing and base charge of getting his learning from the devil (that shrewd personage would not have employed him on the Greek Testament), his eager, indomitable study, his running miles to and back again to hear a sermon after folding his sheep at noon, his keeping his family creditably on never more than £50, and for long on £40 a-year, giving largely in charity, and never wanting, as he said, "lying money,"—when I think of all this, I feel what a strong, independent, manly nature he must have had. We all know his saintly character, his devotion to learning, and to the work of preaching and teaching; but he seems to have been like most complete men, full of humour and keen wit.¹

Examples of this have already been given, and Abernethy will always be proud that good John Brown of Haddington was one of its sons, and studied his Greek Testament, when a herd-boy, upon its quiet hillsides. It ought to be equally proud that he was the head of the honoured line that produced Dr John Brown, who wrote 'Rab and his Friends,' with the many other delightful essays which have enchanted so many in Scotland, and more still among the English-speaking race over the world.

¹ *Horæ Subsecivæ*, vol. ii. pp. 67, 68.

CHAPTER XXIX.

BALVAIRD, MUGDRUM, CARPOW, ETC., WITH THEIR HISTORIC
FAMILIES—MR RUSKIN, PRINCIPAL TULLOCH, ETC.

THE names and history of some of the families connected with the parish have been considered in connection with the charters and records already quoted, and in drawing our study to a close we must make mention of some other facts and features without which our narrative would be incomplete.

The Castle of Balvaird—an ancient Celtic name, meaning the town of the bard—stands at the top of Glenfarg, and from its lofty situation commands an excellent view over the Eden valley and the Lomonds of Fife. It has been thus described by those competent to speak of its architectural features:—

It is a fifteenth-century keep, and presents a fine and rather advanced specimen as regards its planning and arrangements. It is of the common L plan, but the entrance and staircase, instead of being inserted in the thickness of the wall, have a special turret provided for them in the re-entering angle. A wider and better staircase is thus obtained than under the old plan of carrying the staircase up in the thickness of the wall.

The ground-floor is vaulted, and contains the usual stores with sleeping-loft above. The joists of the sleeping-loft, with an ashler wall supporting them, are still preserved. . . .

The hall is on the first floor, with private room adjoining in the wing. The fireplace is well preserved, and is a good specimen of fifteenth-century work. There are three large windows with seats, and a fine ambry or



Balvaird Castle.

sideboard ornamented with the late Gothic carved work of the period, very similar to that at Borthwick, and with the letters of the sacred monogram Jesu Maria.

There is also a small wall chamber with its original door adjoining the fireplace. The garde-robes are placed so that the flues all descend together in one vent. The soil from the garde-robes fell into a small chamber on the ground-floor, and was removed by pulling out a moveable stone at the ground level outside. . . .

There is an unusual arrangement of stone spouts from the roof, whereby these garde-robes could be washed out with rain-water. This points to an improvement in civilisation, and, looking to the elegance of the work, both external and internal, we must recognise in this castle a great advancement in architecture. Here, as at Sauchie, we observe the change from the original and simply useful forms of the machicolations and corbels to a more ornamental design. . . . The watch-turret over the staircase, and the ornamental chimney-copes, are also distinctive features. These and the parapets are here in much better preservation than usual, and render this castle peculiarly interesting. . . .

There is a story above the hall with a timber roof, the beams of which still remain, supported on stone corbels, and hanging from the beams are the remains of the bracketing of the pendent plaster ceiling, while portions of the ornamental plaster-work still remain on the walls or strew the floor. In the wing there are four stories above the kitchen. . . .

In 1567 considerable additions were made to this castle. Another court was formed containing stables and other offices, some of which still remain. Opposite the gate of the outer court is the arched gateway to the inner court or quadrangle, with the date of the work (1567) carved in a panel above the arch. There is a vaulted guard-room on one side, and a series of apartments on the other. Over the entrance-passage is a large room with access from the keep, said to have been the chapel. There were also buildings on the west side of the quadrangle, but these sixteenth-century erections are all greatly ruined, and their use can scarcely be recognised. These additions would no doubt convert this keep into a castle surrounding a courtyard; but as the keep is so well preserved, and is such a good specimen of its kind, we have thought it better to disregard the subsequent additions, and class it along with the keeps with wings.

An enclosure to the south has evidently been a pleasure-garden, and there is a large walled garden or orchard adjoining the castle on the east, all pointing to the more peaceful and settled condition of the country

and the amelioration of manners in the early days of Queen Mary's reign.¹

Over the plain, full-centred arch of the entrance doorway to the keep are the remains of several armorial bearings. The arms are supposed to be those of Margaret Barclay and her husband, Sir Andrew Murray, and if this be the case, the building must be as old as the reign of James IV., 1487 till 1513.²

Such is the description of the castle given by architectural authorities, and we now deal with its family.

1. Sir WILLIAM MURRAY, third son of Sir William Murray of Tullibardine, married Margaret, daughter and sole heir of James Barclay of Arngask and Kippo, with whom he got the lands of Arngask, Balvairst, Kippo, &c. She resigned her whole estates to King James IV. for new infeftment to herself and her husband in liferent and to her heirs after them.³

Sir Andrew Murray of Balvairst, who succeeded his father, Sir David Murray (eldest son of Sir William Murray and Lady Margaret, his wife), in 1550, took a prominent part on the Protestant side during the struggles with the queen regent. He was one of those appointed on the 24th of May 1559 by the gathering of Protestants at Perth to answer the queen regent's ambassadors, the Earl of Argyle, the Prior of St Andrews, and the Lord Sempill. John Knox in the meantime arrived, and "desyred to speak with the same Lordis: which grantit unto him, he was conveyed to thair ludgeing by the Laird of Balvairst."⁴

The Rev. Andrew Murray, minister of Abdie, succeeded to the baronies of Arngask and Kippo in 1631, by a settlement of the first Viscount of Stormont, and had a charter of his whole estates, 14th

¹ "The old Castle of Balvairst is situated in an opening among the hills on the east side of Glenfarg: it is unique in having a court and offices still extant around it, and is worthy of care and preservation."—Dr Laing's *Lindores and its Burgh of Newburgh*, p. 204.

² *Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland*, by David MacGibbon and Thomas Ross, Architects, vol. i. pp. 335-343.

³ *Douglas Peerage of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 539.

⁴ *Knox's Works*, vol. i. pp. 337, 338.

July 1632, to himself and the heirs-male of his body.¹ He was the second son of David Murray of Balgonie, and Agnes his wife, a daughter of Moncrieffe of Moncrieffe.² He was ordained minister of Abdie in 1618; was knighted at the coronation of Charles I. in 1633; had a charter of the lands of Pitlochrie in 1636, "*Domino Andreae Murray de Balvaird militi.*" He was a member of the General Assembly in 1638 at Glasgow, when Henderson was Moderator, and by his "discretion, authority, and moderation was believed to have allayed the heats and differences. He was favourably represented to the king by the Marquis of Hamilton, his Majesty's High Commissioner, but on account of the moderation of his views was deprived by an Assembly of his charge at Abdie.³ Charles I. raised him to the dignity of the peerage by the title of Lord Balvaird in 1641 by letters patent to him "*ejusque hæredes masculos.*" At the death of Mungo, second Viscount of Stormont, he succeeded to the lands, lordship, and barony of Stormont, in which he was served heir of entail of his lordship, 18th May 1642, and died 24th September 1644. He married Lady Elizabeth Carnegie, fifth daughter of David, first Earl of Southesk, by whom he had issue—

(1) David, second Lord Balvaird.

(2) Hon. Sir Andrew Murray of Pitlochrie, ancestor of the Murrays of Murrayshall.

(3) Hon. James Murray, M.D., a distinguished physician.

(4) Sir John Murray of Drumcairn, a Lord of Session from 1681 to the Revolution.

(5) Hon. William Murray, who was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates, and attained eminence in his profession.

¹ Douglas Peerage, vol. ii. p. 542.

² Conolly's Eminent Men of Fife, p. 34.

³ "His is the only instance in the Church [of Scotland] in which a minister has had a knighthood or a peerage conferred. As a peer he attended a meeting of the Convention of Estates, which the Assembly, 10th August 1643, determined was wrong, and give over voicing in Parliament under pain of deposition and further censure."—Dr Scott's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 467.

2. DAVID, second Lord Balvaird, was served heir-male of Andrew, Lord Balvaird, his father, in the lordship and barony of Stormont, 28th February 1654, and succeeded to the titles of Viscount of Stormont and Lord Scone on the death of James, Earl of Annandale, 1658. He had charters of Reidkirk in Annandale, 5th March 1663, and of his whole estates in the counties of Dumfries, Fife, and Perth, 22nd August 1666, erecting them into the viscounty of Stormont, lordship of Balvaird, Cockpool, Lochmaben, and Scone. He died in 1668.¹

3. DAVID, fifth Viscount of Stormont, and only son of David, second Lord of Balvaird, Viscount Stormont, and Lord Scone, by Lady Elizabeth Carnegy, eldest daughter of James, second Earl of Southesk, was served heir-male of his father 7th October 1668 and 9th July 1669. He died in 1731.

His fourth son, the Hon. William Murray, was born at Scone in 1705, and lived an honoured and distinguished life. He attained the greatest eminence as a lawyer; he became Attorney-General in 1754; was raised to the office of Chief-Justice of the Court of King's Bench in 1756; was sworn on 8th November 1756, and the same day created a peer by the title of Baron of Mansfield, in the county of Nottingham, with limitation to the heirs-male of his body.² He was Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a seat in the Cabinet, from 9th April 1757 to 2nd July following. It was principally through his mediation that the coalition between Fox and Pitt was brought about. He was again Chancellor of the Exchequer from 12th September 1767 to 1st December following.³ He was advanced to the dignity of Earl of Mansfield, in the county of Nottingham, 31st October 1776; and was created Earl of Mansfield, in the county of Middlesex, 26th July 1792. It was said of him that "no judge of more comprehensive knowledge, or of more splendid talents, ever sat on

¹ Douglas Peerage, vol. ii. p. 543.

² Ibid., p. 544.

³ *Ut supra.*

the bench." His lordship married Lady Elizabeth Finch, daughter of David, Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham. By her he had no issue, and at his death in 1793 the earldom of Mansfield, in the county of Nottingham, devolved on Louisa, Viscountess of Stormont, and the earldom of Mansfield, in the county of Middlesex, devolved on David, Viscount of Stormont.

4. DAVID, sixth Viscount of Stormont, succeeded his father in 1731, and died 23rd July 1748. He was succeeded by

5. DAVID, seventh Viscount of Stormont, his eldest son, in 1748. His second wife was the Hon. Louisa Cathcart, third daughter of Charles, ninth Lord Cathcart. On the death of William, first Earl of Mansfield, 20th of March 1793, the earldom of Mansfield, in the county of Nottingham, devolved on her; and the earldom of Mansfield, in the county of Middlesex, on her husband, David, Viscount of Stormont.¹

6. Their eldest son, WILLIAM, third Earl of Mansfield and eighth Viscount of Stormont, was born in 1777, and succeeded his father in 1796. He married Frederica, daughter of his Grace William Markham, D.D., the Archbishop of York. He died in 1840, and was succeeded by his son,

7. WILLIAM DAVID MURRAY, fourth Earl of Mansfield, who also succeeded his grandmother in 1843. He married Louisa, daughter of Cuthbert Eddison, Hebburn Hall, Durham. The earl has held many important offices, and was Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1852, 1858-59. The venerable earl's grandson and heir is William David Murray, Lord Balvaird, eldest son of the late Viscount Stormont (died 1893), and Emily, eldest daughter of Sir John Atholl MacGregor, Bart.

¹ Douglas Peerage, pp. 547-549.

At the death of his father he adopted the title Lord Balvaird, and the name recalls the first Lord Balvaird, the minister of Abdie, from whom he is descended. The property of Balvaird belongs to the Mansfield Family.

MUGDRUM, CARPOW, ABERARGIE.

Carpow and Aberargie are ancient properties, and are mentioned in the Pictish Chronicle in connection with the grant of land given by King Nectan to the church of Abernethy in 460 A.D. (see p. 96).

The first mention that we have of Mugdrum is in a charter of Laurence, son of Orm de Abernethy, in which he gives it, between 1189-1199, along with other lands, to the church of St Thomas of Abirbrothoc (see p. 207). The terms used in connection with Mukedrum or Mugdrum ("habent et semper habere solent Keledei"—which the Keledei (of Abirnythy) have always had) clearly indicate that Mugdrum, as Carpow and Aberargie, were originally possessions of the Church, and passed into other hands at a later period.

The next mention we have of it is in the record of an "actioun and cause psewit" before the Lords of Council, 12th January 1492, "be the abbot and convent of Lundores aganis George, erle of Rothes, and Johne Covintrie of Mukdrum."¹

On March 9, 1510, William Scott of Balwery obtained a charter from James IV. to the lands of Mugdrum, with the fishings, formerly reputed a tenandrie of Ballinbreich, then united in the barony of Strathmiglo.²

William Scott gave sasine of Muckdrum to George Orme. The Ormes of Mugdrum embraced the cause of Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, and were confiscated. The sentence does not seem to have been rigorously carried out, and on November 27, 1631, Francis

¹ *Acta Dominorum Concilia*, p. 258.

² Laing's *Lindores*, p. 463.

Orme received a charter of novodamus to the lands of Mugdrum, and conveyed them next day to Henry Cheap of Ormiston. In November 1631 Henry Cheap conveyed them to Stephen Orme of Halhill, who conveyed them, reserving his own liferent, to his eldest son, George, on his marriage in 1634.¹ George Orme sold Mugdrum to the Right Hon. Colonel Ludovic Leslie, brother-german of Patrick, Lord Lindores, 20th February 1648. Colonel Leslie sold the estate to William Arnot on 2nd March 1663. William Arnot married Jeane Cheape, daughter of James Cheape of Ormiston, in 1663, and they conveyed Mugdrum and the Reid Inch to Harie Cheape, younger of Rossie, in 1684: he was succeeded by his son James in 1707. He sold them in 1718 to Richard Murray, an Edinburgh merchant, who conveyed them to Richard Oswald of Port-Glasgow in 1723. Lord George Murray came into possession of Mugdrum, and resided there. Richard Oswald reacquired Mugdrum and the Island, for on February 12, 1737, he conveyed them to Henry Barclay of Collernie, who again conveyed them, with the consent of Lord Lindores, to Peter Hay, younger, of Leys, in the possession of whose descendants they still are.²

Jane Hay, the only daughter of John Hay Balfour of Leys, married James Paterson of Carpow, and thus the estates of Mugdrum and Carpow passed into one family. The present proprietor is Edmund Paterson Balfour Hay.

There was a legend connected with the Hays, which is narrated in the following verse :—

“While the mistletoe bats on Errol’s oak,
And that oak stands fast,
The Hays shall flourish, and their good grey hawk
Shall not flinch before the blast.
And when the root of the oak decays,
And the mistletoe dwines on its withered breast,
The grass shall grow on the Earl’s hearthstone,
And the corbies crawl on the falcon’s nest.”

¹ Laing’s Lindores, p. 465.

² *Ibid.*, p. 466.

It was a similar belief that was held by Lord Byron : on his first visit to the ancestral estate of Newstead "he planted, it seems, a young oak in some part of the grounds, and had an idea that as it flourished, so should he."¹

The belief is a survival from the old times of Nature-worship, and is connected with that form of it known as animism. Primitive man thought of the soul as a concrete material thing of definite bulk, which was capable of being seen and handled. It could be absent from his body and still continue to animate him by a mysterious sympathy or "action at a distance." As long as it remained uninjured, the man was well; if it was injured, he became ill or died. Primitive man imagined he could take his soul out of his body and deposit it in some safe place for security. In a place which he considered absolutely secure he may leave his soul there permanently, and the supposed advantage was, that as long as his soul remained unharmed where it was deposited, the man was immortal, as nothing could kill his body, since the life was not in it. The belief in an external soul characterised early nature-religions, like the Celtic, and in folklore the life of a person became so bound up in the life of a tree that the withering of the tree was regarded as an anticipation and certainty of the death of the person. The legend of the Hays is thus interesting as a survival of an early nature-religion belief, and connects the traditions of the family with a far-vanished past.

Another feature of the families in Mugdrum and Carpow was their Jacobite tendencies. At Carpow, then the home of John Oliphant, Prince Charles spent a night, and Lord George Murray, his ablest adviser, lived at Mugdrum in 1730. Lord George Murray joined the Chevalier at Perth, and was appointed Lieutenant-General of the forces. It was said by one who was in the expedition "that had the Prince slept during his entire Scottish residence, at least for a proper time after the battle of Preston,

¹ Golden Bough, vol. ii. p. 330.

and left the entire guidance of his affairs to Lord George Murray, when waking he would have found the diadem on his father's brow."¹

Lord George Murray was the younger son of John, first Duke of Atholl. He was connected with the Spanish enterprise of 1719 on behalf of Charles; he escaped abroad, and was an officer in the army of the King of Sardinia. He was pardoned, returned, and was presented to George I. He joined the Rebellion of 1745, and became General of the forces, distinguishing himself by courage and skill. After the defeat of Culloden he fled the country, and died in Holland in 1760. A liferent provision in the estate of Glencarse which he had was forfeited. His eldest son John, born in 1729, succeeded as third Duke of Atholl in 1764.²

The name Carmichael of Balmeddie has been a frequently recurring one in this parish history. The family held the property of Potti, now known as Ayton, in Abernethy, and Carmichael was a strong Jacobite. His name appears in the list of rebels as "one who collected the Land Tax for the Rebels and voluntarily accepted of that office."³ His property was confiscated, and he afterwards lived at Pitblae, in the village of Abernethy. The following is a brief sketch of his family:—

David Carmichael of Balmedie.—This family is said to have descended from Robert, second son of Sir John de Carmichael of that ilk, who fought at the battle of Beaugé in 1421. David, mentioned in the List, was probably not the Laird of Balmedie, who at that time is understood to have been Thomas Carmichael, who died in 1746, leaving an only son, James, afterwards distinguished as a physician. John Carmichael of Baiglie, in the same parish, whose representative is now an officer in the French navy, was also out in the '45. The person named on the same page of the List as collector of the stent may well have been the laird of Baiglie: he was related to the Balmedie family.⁴

¹ Spottiswoode Miscellany, vol. ii. pp. 484, 485.

² A List of Persons concerned in the Rebellion 1745-46, p. 371.

³ *Ut supra*, p. 43.

⁴ *Ut supra*, p. 370.

Peter Carmichael of Balmedie (in the lordship and regality of Abernethy), described as a "stout gentleman," along with John Lesley of Parkhill and others, enraged at the martyrdom of George Wishart, took a prominent part in the murder of Cardinal Beaton. His name appears in the summons of treason. He was among the besieged in the Castle of St Andrews, and was taken captive in a French galley. He exhibited a great repugnance to the mass, and was imprisoned along with Kirkaldy of Grange, Robert and William Lesley, at Mount St Michel, where he corresponded with John Knox. "The two brethrein, William and Robert Leslyes, . . . came to Rowane. William Kirkcaldy and Petir Carmichael, in beggaris garment, came to Conqwet, and by the space of twelf or threttein weakis, thei travailled as poore marinaris, from porte to porte, till at lenth thei gat a French schipe, and landed in the Weast, and from thense came to England, whare thei mett befor thame the said Johne Knox, who that same wynter was delivered, and Alexander Clerk in his cumpany."¹ How long he survived is uncertain, but a charter of confirmation was passed "*quondam Petro Carmichaell de Balmadie, Euphemie Wymes ejus conjugii et quondam Jacobo Carmichaell de Balmadie, suo fratri,*" of the lands of Kirkdrone, Easter Drone, Balmadie, and Quhelphill, in the shires of Perth and Lanark, 13th December 1593.

The next in succession was David, who died before 1646,—David Carmichael of Balmadie, on November 14, 1646, having been served heir of his father, David Carmichael of Balmadie. Two years later he is styled in another service "*Dom. David Carmichael de Balmadie miles.*"²

The following are the leading heritors at present: The Earl of Mansfield; the Earl of Wemyss and March; Sir Robert D.

¹ Knox's Works, vol. i. p. 231; also pp. 176, 181, 225, 226, 229.

² Retours—Fife, Nos. 575, 747; Perth, Nos. 557, 575.

Moncrieffe, Bart. of that ilk; Edmund Paterson Balfour Hay of Mugdrum and Carpow; William Livingston Watson of Ayton;¹ Mrs Charlotte E. R. Drummond Hay of Seggieden; Mrs Somerville of Carey; Dr Mackinlay of Cordon; David Marr Henderson of Gattaway; Robert Cathcart of Pitcairlie; W. P. Anderson of Dunbarrow and Glentarkie; Alexander Williamson of Clunie; P. B. Skene of Pitlour; John Skinner of Colzie; W. H. Dunlop of Doonside; Mrs Ritchie of Broadwell.

It is interesting to know that Mr Ruskin's first poem was written on Glenfarg—evidently not far from the entrance where the ruined mill now stands, and near the spot where the old chapel of Pottie used to be. It belongs to the autumn of 1827, and was written by John Ruskin when a boy of eight years of age. He says of it, "All that I ever could be, and all that I cannot be, the weak little rhyme already shows."

"Papa, how pretty those icicles are,
That are seen so near, that are seen so far;
Those dripping waters that come from the rocks,
And many a hole, like the haunt of a fox;
That silvery stream that runs babbling along,
Making a murmuring, dancing song;
Those trees that stand waving upon the rock's side,
And men that, like spectres, among them glide;
And waterfalls that are heard from far,
And come in sight when very near;

¹ Across the lawn from Ayton House is a private observatory containing an equatorial refractor, with object-glass $11\frac{1}{8}$ inches clear aperture, by Merz of Munich. The other parts of the telescope—eyepieces, three finders, &c.—were made by Alex. Ross of London. The length of the telescope is 16 feet. This fine instrument was first shown at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, and was there called the Trophy Telescope (see Professor Piazz Smyth's article in 'Good Words,' February 1863). It was first erected at Elchies in Strathspey, and was afterwards transferred to Ayton. The outer chamber contains a small transit instrument.

And the water-wheel that turns slowly round,
 Grinding the corn that requires to be ground;¹
 And mountains at a distance seen,
 And rivers winding through the plain;
 And quarries with their craggy stones,
 And the wind among them moans."²

(Notes ¹ and ² are Ruskin's own.)

Abernethy was also associated with the early boyhood of two who attained great eminence in the Church of Scotland. One was the late Rev. Dr George Stewart Burns, the honoured minister of Glasgow Cathedral; the other was the Very Rev. Principal Tulloch of St Mary's College, St Andrews.

Tulloch was born in the neighbouring parish of Dron in 1823, and Mrs Oliphant in her biography writes: "I find in some notes of events in an old diary the only information procurable about Tulloch's infancy. He describes himself as having been 'nursed at Aberargie, with an old Dissenting couple of the name of Willison, till about six years of age. Old Willison, a very quaint old man,' the Principal adds, with a gleam of humorous recollection in that distant haze of years."³

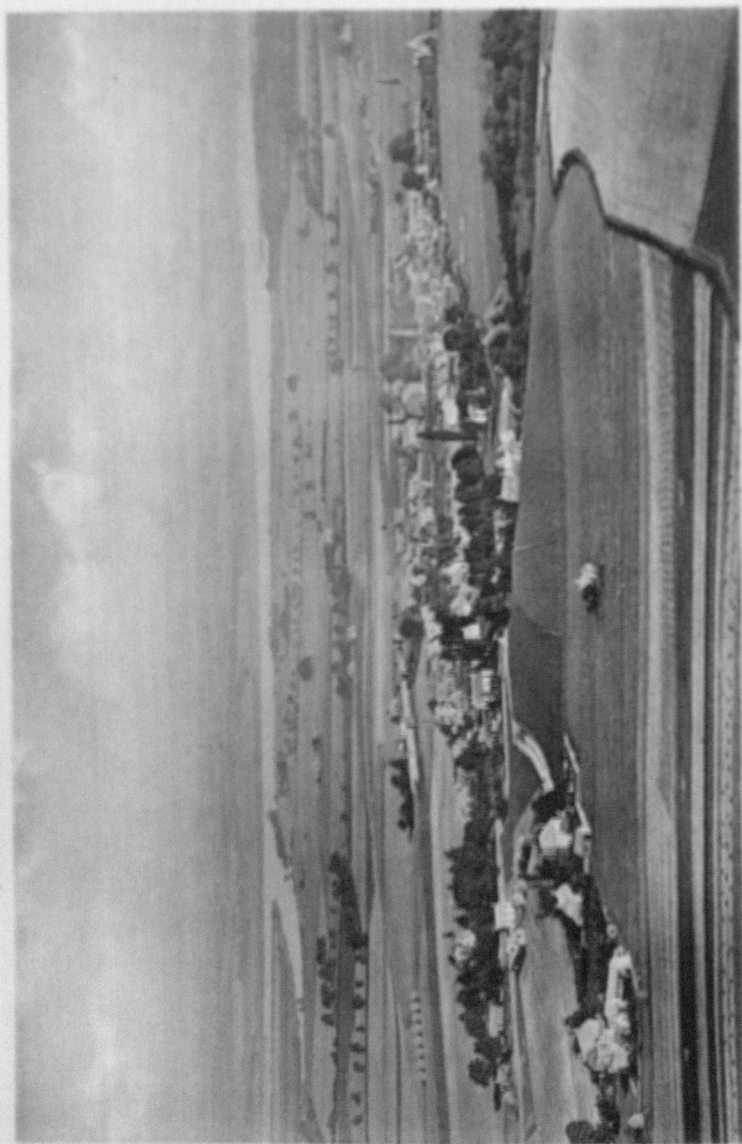
Dr Burns' early education was received in the old parish school of Abernethy.

¹ Political economy of the future.

² So foretelling 'Stones of Venice,' and this essay on Athena (The Queen of the Air, iii. 12).*

³ Memoir of Principal Tulloch, p. 3.

* The Poems of John Ruskin, vol. i. pp. 5, 6.



View of Abernethy from the Castle Talo.

CHAPTER XXX.

ABERNETHY OF TO-DAY.

A FINER bit of landscape than that of the surrounding country of Abernethy is perhaps nowhere to be seen in Scotland: it is a lovely combination of hill, plain, wood, and river. To the north, and not very far from the village, the winding Earn joins the broadening Tay, and it is probably owing to this that it attained its early importance. On the south it is ridged by a spur of the Ochils, intersected by lovely glens; on the east is the widening Firth; on the west, Strathearn, the Esdraelon of Scotland.

The characteristic feature of the parish is the venerable Round Tower, which stands on a slope about the centre of the village, at the entrance to the parish church: erected about 850 A.D., it has watched at least thirty generations of worshippers entering to pray. From its side the jousts are still suspended, reminding passers of offenders long since passed away, and warning trespassers of to-day that the lot of sinners always has been hard. Ascending the hill still farther by the U.P. Wynd, south of the tower, one reaches the imposing modern church, the denomination of which gives its name to the approach. Beyond it one finds the Williamson Public Hall, erected for the village by the beneficence of its old schoolmaster.

The path from the Tower-gate through the churchyard leads to the west door of the parish church, which was built with the severe baldness of the church architecture that characterised 1802.

The highroad from Newburgh to Perth sweeps round the north of the village, and here are situated the Free church, and east from it a small woollen and linen factory, which provides employment for about one hundred young women. We pass the little street known as the Back Dykes. As we approach it we recognise the sound once so familiar, but now slowly becoming less frequent as the aged hands of the venerable handloom weavers cease from toil. The population of the parish is 1585, and the industries on which the people depend are agriculture and salmon-fishing.

Looking from the top of the tower into the peaceful streets and over the mossy thatch and lichened stones of ancient cottages, the stranger might well imagine that the harmonies of sky and hill, of valley and river, must penetrate the homes of the people. And perhaps they do. But the people, moulded as they have been in the midst of theological and ecclesiastical questions, inherit the love of individualism and independent thought and judgment; they have the typical reserve and warm-heartedness of the Scots, Fife shrewdness and caution, Celtic virtues and failings. The respectful and reverent observance of Sunday is still to be admired in Abernethy. As the Tower bell rings out the evening curfew; as it rings out three times on Sunday morning, recalling the early services of the Reformed Church; as it rings out on the day of St Bride's Fair, just as it would do before the Reformation swept the saint's festival service out of existence,—one feels that the Abernethy people of to-day are still unconsciously held by their past.

To one acquainted with its past, the historical atmosphere surrounds Abernethy, and the present is glorified by its mighty memories. One can feel that the words with which Dr Walter C. Smith describes the near cathedral town of Dunblane apply equally to Abernethy, and with them I draw this work to a close:—

" You know the place wherein
The weary toil and spin.

Far otherwise the old church-town,
With the grey minster for its crown :
Its tide of work has ebbd away :
Its pleasuring was never gay :
Yet there the morning broke,
And the new world awoke.

And it is well, amid the whirr
Of restless wheels and busy stir,
To find a quiet spot where live
Fond pious thoughts conservative,
That ring to an old chime,
And bear the moss of time.

For here in wild and lawless days
The Culdee waked a psalm of praise
For Gospel light and liberty,
And help of man's great misery :
And darkness from its throne
Fled at the Cross alone.

The good monk had his working day,
The good priest also passed away,
The mitre faded, and the crook,
And chanted hymn and lettered book :
But in this quiet place
They left a natural grace.

A quaint old place—a minster grey,
And grey old town that winds away,
Through gardens, down the sloping ridge
To river's brim and ancient bridge,
Where the still waters flow
To the deep pool below."¹

¹ The Bishop's Walk, pp. 3-7.

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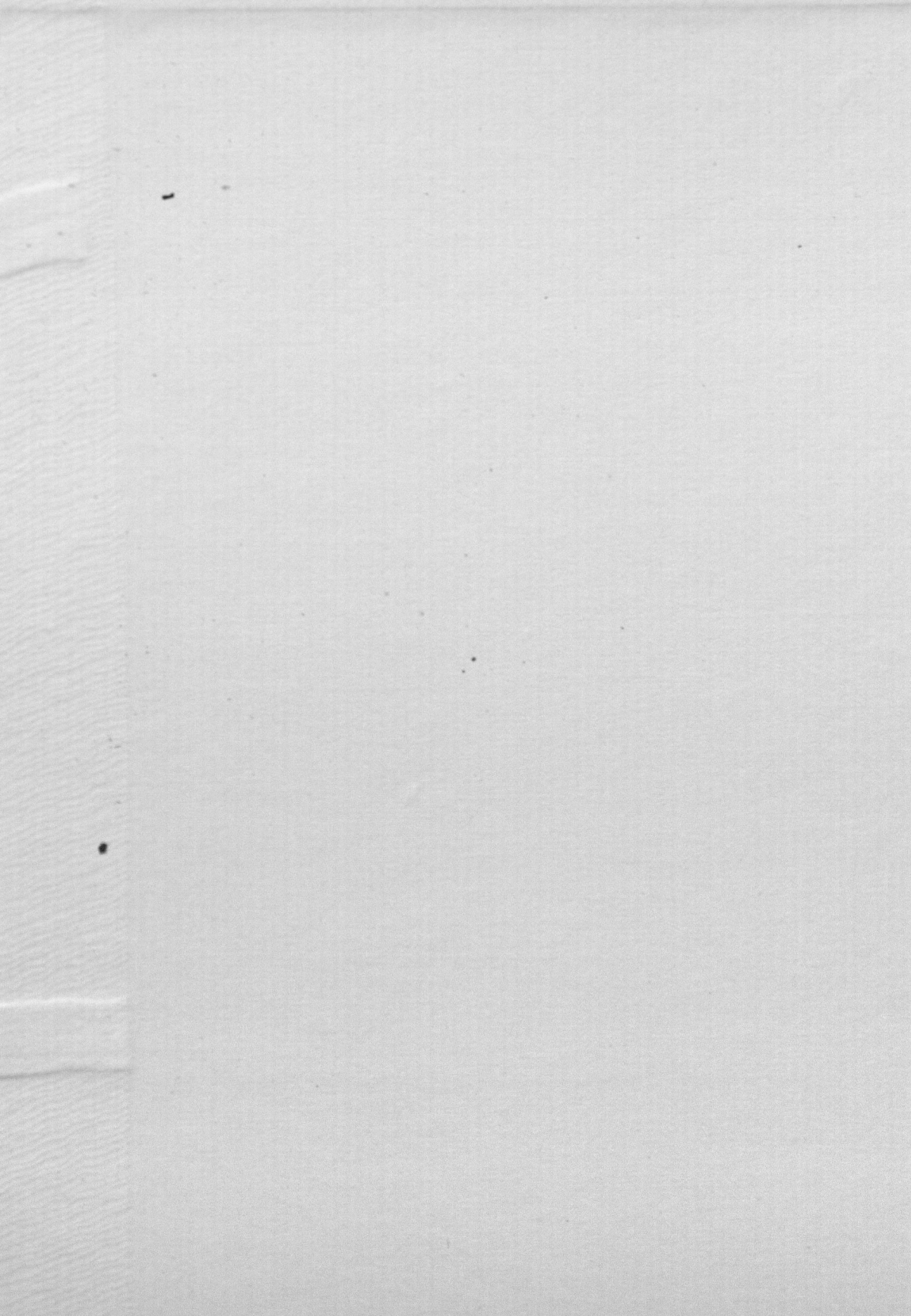
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